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MARCH 2015 • ₹100

INDIA'S NO. 1 HEALTH MAGAZINE

LOVE YOURSELF LOVE YOUR BODY

Vidya Balan

How She Embraced Herself —And You Can Too!

THE BEST SKIN FOR YOUR AGE

Nature's Allergy Cure

Amazing Health For the Whole Family

(Kids, parents, partner—and you!)

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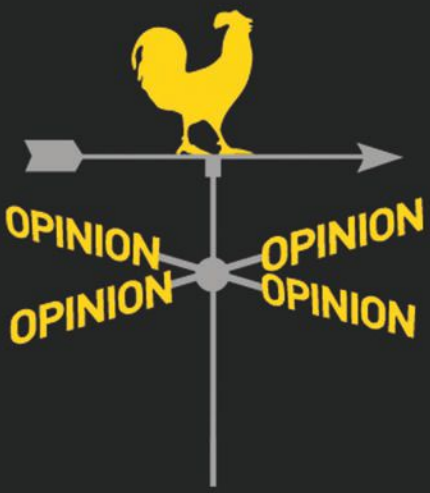


Amazing health for the whole family—kids, parents, partner—and you. p 29, 48, 54, 56, 58



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On Our Cover: Vidya Balan Photographed by Rohan Shrestha; Cover Design by Manish Verma



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INDIA TODAY GROUP Prevention

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Down (with) Size



When you meet lots of famous people as a journalist you cease to be star struck beyond a point. But every once in few years, you meet someone who makes an impression on you. Our cover girl, Vidya Balan, is one such person.

I met her at a café in Mumbai last week for our cover story. She came on time, apologised that our chat had to be at a coffee place and not her home, and settled down comfortably, smiling her big smile. You can tell a person by the way they smile: it was open, easy and winning. We decided to move to the courtyard outside for our chat, and as we stepped out, she held the door for me. She's a regular person, yeah I'd got that by now. But she was a regular person with all the niceties intact, which is a rare thing in today's world. She exchanged pleasantries with the café staff and later, easily agreed to be photographed with them, in her fuss free, no-make up look.

Vidya Balan's battle with her body is not news anymore, but talking to her, I sensed the hurt and anger she once felt. This constant public scrutiny comes with the territory, we all understand that. What we don't understand is where to draw the line. Whether it's Aishwariya Rai's post-partum puffiness or Vidya Balan's waist size, it is their choice—or compulsion.

But I guess the last thing anyone cares for in today's world is other peoples' feelings. *Prevention* readers dealing with weight and body issues have shared with us the deep gashes left in them from things hurled by people who know and love them. Film stars are not even 'real people with real feelings', we think, so we casually toss insults at them without blinking. With social media, they are easier game.

Vidya Balan revealed to *Prevention* for the first time in detail the real reason her weight became a problem. For three and a half years she was put on meds she did not need. The people responsible would have faced litigation elsewhere; they're plain lucky to have got away with this. At *Prevention* we take this opportunity to remind ourselves to be proactive as patients. The power of each one of us to question our doctor, never to blindly hand over our bodies to somebody else and always get a second opinion before starting long-term meds or a procedure. Clearly this can happen to the best of people—Vidya is incredibly smart, empowered and on top of her life—so we all need to watch out, every time.

Vidya Balan possibly paid the price for being a famous person—think what her weight loss success story could do for her dietician's career? Vidya was vulnerable, but she's reclaimed herself and how! Read her interview on p 94.
You will see how she's finally learnt to live fearlessly, through her remarkable journey. You'll be inspired to embrace yourself all over again—just like she did. Give yourself a big hug, lovely ladies, and see how good it feels!

Sanghamitra

Sanghamitra Chakraborty
Editorial Director

PHOTOGRAPH BY GULSHAN SACHDEVA; MAKE-UP BY ASHIMA KAPOOR; STYLING BY JAHNAVI PRASAD; LOCATION COURTESY: INTERCONTINENTAL EROS; CLOTHES: TOP, DEEPIKA GOVIND

Readers' Letters

Keeping Health First

On days with crammed schedules, our health always takes a back seat. Even when I am out of the office, I keep fretting about pending work that I would need to look at the next day. Amidst all this, physical fitness is something that I don't seem to be giving a thought to. However, *Prevention* reminds me that I need to re-evaluate how my day is spent and give enough time to my health as well. Your magazine is so warm that when I read it, I feel happy that there is someone out there who is thinking about me and my family's health. Thanks *Prevention*.
—Priya Sharma via email



equinox
Heart Rate Monitors and Vapourisers

MY BEST FRIEND

This letter wins a special prize from Equinox

Prevention is not just a magazine, it has become my best friend who is inseparable. Being an Army officer's wife, we are generally in remote, cut-off areas, away from civilisation. When my husband is posted at such a place, *Prevention* comes very handy. I go through the pages again and again to tackle issues related to health, fitness, beauty and food. The article *Use Cancer as a Second Chance* (February, 2015) is a real eye opener and conveys a very empathetic message. I also liked *Trouble shooting Teens* (February, 2015) for the tips it offers in tackling kids at this stage. A big thanks to *Prevention*.
—Varinder Kaur via email


Natural Healer • Ginger

Root Cause

Warm up to the therapeutic benefits of this popular aromatic spice in winter. By Sejila Tarwar

Ayesha in Kozhikode across the choto-ginger-irrigated to south-east Asia and India. Chaat is the biggest producer of this fragrant root followed by India. The Malabar Coast is known for its ginger being best. Used liberally as a home-hold remedy for improving digestion and for fighting colds, Ayurvedic texts credit ginger as a good food and medicine with healing properties.

THE MULTI-TASKER
Used fresh or dried in Indian and other Asian cuisines, ginger is also a popular ingredient in pickles and salads. A well-known flavouring agent for tea and other beverages like ginger ale and ginger brandy, it is recommended by health experts for treating lots of ailments like nausea, stomach ache, colic pain in children, and morning sickness in pregnant women. Many studies have also given a thumbs up to the pungent spice as an effective remedy for nausea caused by chemotherapy in cancer.

FLU FIGHTER
An immunity booster, ginger is your natural guard against cold, respiratory infections and seasonal allergies. Thanks to its anti-inflammatory and antiviral properties, having a decoction ginger and lemon recipe that will keep you away from sniffles and hay fever. Cut fresh ginger in long strips and soak in lemon juice with just a pinch of salt and a few dried whole chillies (both for a to 5 days). Have it with your daily meal in the winter and you will be able to keep the cold weather better than ever. For those prone to allergies and sinusitis, try this one: Mix 1 tablespoon ginger juice with 1 tablespoon fresh and homogenised (if store bought) or 1 tsp of juice and have it twice a day.

DR SAILA VENUGOPALAN is an Ayurvedic consultant and author. She is the founder-director of the Sarvam Ayurveda Health Tourism Pvt Ltd and Sarvam Ayurveda Foundation, Ottapalam.

Send your questions to askprevention@intoday.com

Natural Cough Cure

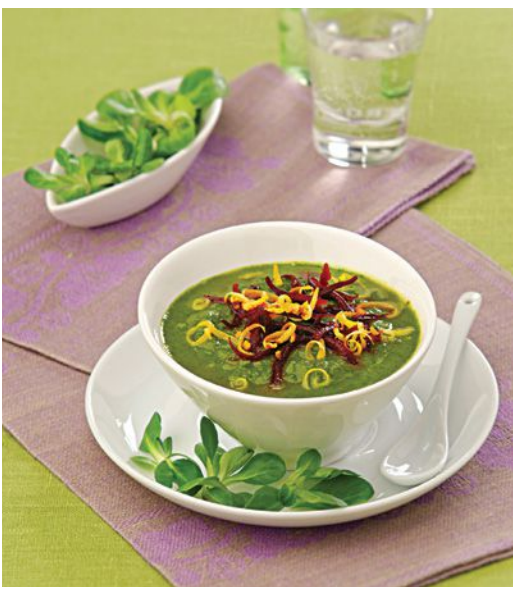
I love *Prevention* for its good health tips which are practical and easy to incorporate even in our busy lives, as well as for the latest scientific breakthroughs. I wish to share with the other readers, a home remedy for a cough syrup that has helped me many times. Soak 20 g cinnamon, black currant and chopped ginger, 30 g cardamoms and 15 g aniseed in 1 litre of water over night. Add 30 g rock sugar in the same water the next morning and boil it until the water is reduced to half. Cool, strain and bottle it. Use a tsp or 2 when you have a cough.
—Urmilla Ramrakhiani via email

GET IN TOUCH

We look forward to getting to know you better! Send us your comments, questions or ideas: Write to us at askprevention@intoday.com, or Editor, *Prevention*, 3rd Floor, Film City-8, Sector 16A, NOIDA, UP-201301.

Q I exercise post work making it difficult for me to have an early dinner which I've heard is essential for weight loss. Please advise.

A: Having dinner at least 2 and a half hours before bedtime is a healthy habit, more so when you are trying to lose weight, says New Delhi-based nutritionist Neelanjana Singh. However, in case it is not possible for you to maintain the gap you can try the following. "Have a healthy carb-and protein-rich snack (fresh cut fruits with yoghurt or a vegetable and chicken/cottage cheese sandwich) before your workout so that you are not ravenously hungry when you reach home. Have a light but nutritious dinner as soon as you get home (think salad and soup). Sit in Vajrasan after dinner to speed up digestion before you hit the bed," says Singh.





Q: I get headaches after workouts. Is it normal?

A: Exercise headaches occur during or after sustained, strenuous exercise and can stem from dehydration, a dip in blood sugar, tight muscles in your chest, neck and shoulders or high blood pressure. Here's what you can do to avoid it. Grab a small bite and sip on some lemon water before the workout to avoid low blood sugar or dehydration. Keep sipping water during the session, do a warm up to prep the muscles. Ensure that you ease your body into exercise and allow your heart to adjust to the intensity gradually. If the pain still persists, see a doctor to rule out other underlying health issues, suggests Dr Deepak Chaudhary, Sports Injury Centre Safdurjung Hospital, New Delhi.

ALL IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

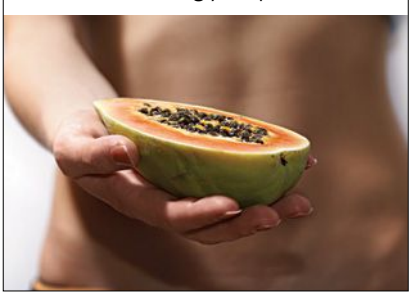


Q Does a massage have to hurt in order to be effective?

A: If you're going for a massage within 24 hours of a strenuous workout—say a long run—your muscles might be sore which can lead to some discomfort during and after the therapy. This is because a massage involves releasing muscle tension and increasing circulation, says Dr Harmeet Bawa, physiotherapist, Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi. If post-treatment soreness doesn't ease within a day or so, apply cold compress for some relief. However, if you go for a massage regularly or have not strained your muscles recently, you shouldn't feel any pain. That said, pain during massage may also have to do with the kind of pressure the therapist is applying. Go for one that doesn't make you go ouch each time.

Q: Why does a menstrual period wreck my bowel movements?

A: Change in bowel habits prior to and during periods is completely normal and usually related to the hormonal changes that occur during the menstrual cycle, says *Prevention* advisor Dr Duru Shah, director, Gynaecworld, Mumbai. Before your period begins, the lining in your uterus thickens and can press up against the colon and lead to constipation. Once you start shedding the lining, chemicals called prostaglandins are released. These help the uterus contract to help shed the lining (causing cramps) and one study found higher concentrations of this chemical in women who had diarrhoea during their periods. It is a good idea to watch what you are eating during your period. Many of us tend to indulge in comfort food during our periods. You can alter your diet to include lots of fresh fruits and vegetables and limit your intake of salt, dairy products, sugar, alcohol, spicy foods and caffeine, before and during your period.



Explore, Get More



CAN'T WAIT? A PEEK AT OUR **NEXT ISSUE**

Grab a copy of *Prevention*'s 8th Anniversary Special Issue

> Women who've embraced their age and their secret to looking and feeling great
> The right make-up for you
> What top nutritionists eat to stay in shape



DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

We've launched our digital edition! Download it on your smartphones and tablets. *http://digital-magazines.intoday.in/prevention*

YOGA MAT TLC

> Yoga may be a great stress-buster, but that mat sees a lot of sweat, too. Here's what you can do: post workout to keep your mat germ-free—let your mat air dry and every couple of classes, use a non-abrasive sponge, mild soap and water to scrub the mat down and dry it in the sun. *www.prevention.com*

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE





WE CANSUPPORT

> CanSupport organised its 8th annual "Walk for Life", a charity walk to raise awareness about cancer, honour survivors and raise money for the cause, on February 8, 2015. Teams *Prevention* and *Women's Health* gathered at Nehru Park, New Delhi to join the cause. Sangeeta Jaitley, wife of the Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley flagged off the Walk, which saw participation from film actor, activist and cancer survivor Manisha Koirala, film actor and CanSupport friend Aditi Rao Hydari, Gursharan Kaur, wife of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, among others. CanSupport is headed by Harmala Gupta, a pioneer in the field of palliative care.

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Experts

Prevention works with these leading experts to bring you the best, most authoritative information in every issue.

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

DR ISSAC MATHAI, medical director, SOUKYA International Holistic Health Centre, Bengaluru.

CARDIOLOGY

DR ASHOK SETH, chairman, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute and chairman, Cardiology Council, Fortis Group of Hospitals, New Delhi. He is one of the most renowned interventional cardiologists of the country who has performed a large number of angiographies.

DR K SRINATH REDDY, president, Public Health Foundation of India, New Delhi. A consultant with the WHO, he is considered a global authority in his field.

DERMATOLOGY

DR REKHA SHETH, is a leading cosmetic dermatologist in Mumbai. She is founder-president, Cosmetology Society of India and runs Yuva, a successful chain of skin clinics.

ENDOCRINOLOGY

DR AMBRISH MITHAL, chairman, Division of Endocrinology and Diabetes, Medanta-The Medicity, Gurgaon. He is also chairperson, Bone and Joint Decade-India.

DR NIKHIL TANDON, professor of Endocrinology and Metabolism, AIIMS, New Delhi.

ENT/MEDICAL PRACTICES

DR ARUN AGGARWAL, is director, ENT Department, Maulana Azad Medical College, New Delhi. He is also deputy director general, health services and President Delhi Medical Council.

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NISHA VARMA, Pune-based Reebok University Master Trainer, yoga instructor and an aqua instructor certified by the Federation of International Sports, Aerobics and Fitness, Singapore.

VINATA SHETTY, Mumbai-based Reebok University Master Trainer. She is also a certified trainer from the American College of Sports Medicine.

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DR DURU SHAH, chairman of Gynaecworld and Gynaecworld Fertility Clinic, Mumbai.

DR FIRUZA R PARIKH, director of assisted reproduction and genetics, Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre, Mumbai.

DR INDIRA HINDUJA, consultant gynaecologist, Jaslok Hospital and Hinduja Hospital, Mumbai. Dr Hinduja gave India its first GIFT baby in 1988.

GASTROENTEROLOGY

DR RAJIV KHOSLA, senior consultant, gastroenterology, Max Super Speciality and Holy Family Hospital, New Delhi. He also runs a special clinic for IBD at Medanta-The Medicity, Gurgaon.

HOLISTIC HEALTH

DR VIJAYA VENKAT, founder, The Health Awareness Centre (THAC), Mumbai. She is also a member of The American Society of Nutritional and Dietary Consultants.

LABORATORY MEDICINE

DR NAVIN DANG, specialist in laboratory medicine and director, Dr Dang's Lab Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi.

MENTAL HEALTH

DR PRABHA CHANDRA, professor of psychiatry, NIMHANS, Bengaluru. She specialises in post-natal depression.

NEUROLOGY

DR RAJSHEKHAR REDDI, principal consultant and head of unit, Neurology, Max Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi.

NUTRITION

ISHI KHOSLA, clinical nutritionist, Centre for Dietary Counselling, New Delhi. She is also founder of The Celiac Society for Delhi.

DR KAMALA KRISHNASWAMY, former president, Nutrition Society of India and a council member of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences. She is a former director, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad.

OBESITY AND DIABETES

DR ANOOP MISRA, chairman, Fortis Centre of Excellence for Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolic Diseases and National Diabetes, Obesity and Cholesterol Foundation, New Delhi.

ONCOLOGY

DR RAJENDRA A BADWE, director, Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai. He is also a renowned cancer surgeon.

DR SH ADVANI, director, Medical Oncology, Jaslok Hospital & Research Centre, and chief medical oncologist at the Asian Institute of Oncology, Mumbai.

OPHTHALMOLOGY

DR SANJAY DHAWAN, director, Ophthalmology, Max Healthcare. His professional area of expertise include cataract, refractive and glaucoma surgery, and medical ophthalmology.

ORTHOPAEDICS

DR PK DAVE, HOD, Orthopaedics and chairman, advisory board, Rockland Hospital, was former director, AIIMS and is an eminent orthopaedic surgeon. He is professor emeritus and former president, National Academy of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.

PAEDIATRICS

DR ARVIND TANEJA, advisor and senior consultant, Paediatrics, Max Healthcare, Delhi. Recipient of the 'Distinguished Physician' award of the Delhi Medical Association.

DR PROF ANUPAM SIBAL, group medical director, Apollo Hospitals. He is also an adjunct professor of Paediatrics at the University of Queensland. His specialisation is paediatric gastroenterology and hepatology.







Healthy Reading

Prevention and HarperCollins India came together to launch *Prevention* advisor Dr Isasac Mathai's new book *Holistic Health: A doctor's guide to rediscovering health and happiness, naturally* on January 23, 2015 at Amaltas, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. Kalli Purie, group synergy and creative officer, India Today Group, hosted an engaging chat session with the author. Members of the audience also participated in the lively Q&A that was followed by a quiz. The guests snacked on healthy bites created by Zehen at The Manor and enjoyed the healthy spread.





1. Kalli Purie interacts with Dr Issac Mathai.
2. Healthy bites from Zehen at The Manor.
3. Senior oncologist Dr Ramesh Sarin shares her thoughts.
4. The audience listens intently.
5. Natural beauty expert Suparna Trikha with Dr Mathai.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY: NARESH KUMAR; TOP RIGHT IMAGE: NISHTHA ROHATGI

Health

Stroke · Social Media · Germ Zones

Take the 20-Second Balance Test

What if we told you that trying to stand on one leg for 20 seconds (or more) could help you gauge the health of your brain? You might think we were a bit off balance ourselves. But that's exactly what a new study in the journal *Stroke* suggests.

In a study of 1400 people (average age 67) at the Center for Genomic Medicine at Kyoto University, researchers found that those who struggled to balance for 20 seconds had cerebral small-vessel disease (SVD), even though they weren't exhibiting any classic symptoms. SVD is related to stroke, dementia and even Parkinson's. How can standing on one leg provide insights into the brain's health? "Balance is achieved and maintained by 3 main sensory circuits," explains Jose Biller, MD, chair of neurology at Loyola Medicine in Illinois. "Vision, proprioception (your sense of body position) and the vestibular system (inner ear, etc.)—and the brain controls all these sensory circuits. So any loss of motor coordination, such as the inability to balance for any length of time, could suggest brain damage. If you can't break that 20-second threshold then, consult with your physician. – *Carey Rossi*



SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Do Social Media Like Your **Health Depends on It**

A new study identifies LinkedIn as the most mood-lifting social media site of them all. But unless you consider career networking a hobby, you probably aren't Linking In daily. Here's how to make your actual go-to social sites work for your health and happiness this year.

Twitter

Research suggests that news junkies eat more healthfully than those who live under a rock. Follow these handles for bite-size health news and advice.

@MayoClinic
Updates from the revered clinic
@CDC_ehealth
Breaking CDC news
@WebMD
Timely health news
@HollyPhillipsMD
The CBS This Morning *medical correspondent's take on health news*
@PreventionIndia
News and advice with you in mind

Pinterest

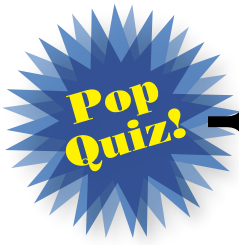
Start a board of baby animal pictures. One study found that looking at cute images makes you more focussed when you start your next task.

Facebook

It's certainly not always the route to joy (heard of FOMO?), but research finds that scrolling through your own photos and posts can be soothing when you're feeling low.



INFOGRAPHIC: DEVENDER SINGH RAWAT; SOURCE: *PREVENTION*, US



According to new research, which of the following could jeopardise your sharp memory?

A. Poor immunity
B. High blood pressure
C. Nearsightedness
D. All of the above

Answer: B. A recent study tested the blood pressure of 4,057 middle-aged adults. Fast-forward 2 decades and those who had high blood pressure in midlife scored 10% lower on memory tests. For tips on getting your numbers down, go to *prevention.com/lower-your-bp*. Source: *Neurology*

Bad Day, Two Choices

Someone just royally ticked you off—what do you do? Flying off the handle is a tempting option for sure. But as two recent studies explain, your reaction to frustration has sobering (or uplifting) health implications. Pick your path:

RAGE ON
Not ideal. In one new study, frequent squabblers had double the risk of death from all causes.

Source: Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health

FORGIVE
Smart! Letting things go is linked with heart helpers such as better blood flow and a more efficient heartbeat.

Source: American Journal of Cardiology

BOTTOM LINE
A spat here and there won't kill you. But being the bigger person ultimately may mean being a healthier one, too.

ORLANDO HOETZEL

Germophobes, Brace Yourselves

Three nasty truths have emerged from recent research.

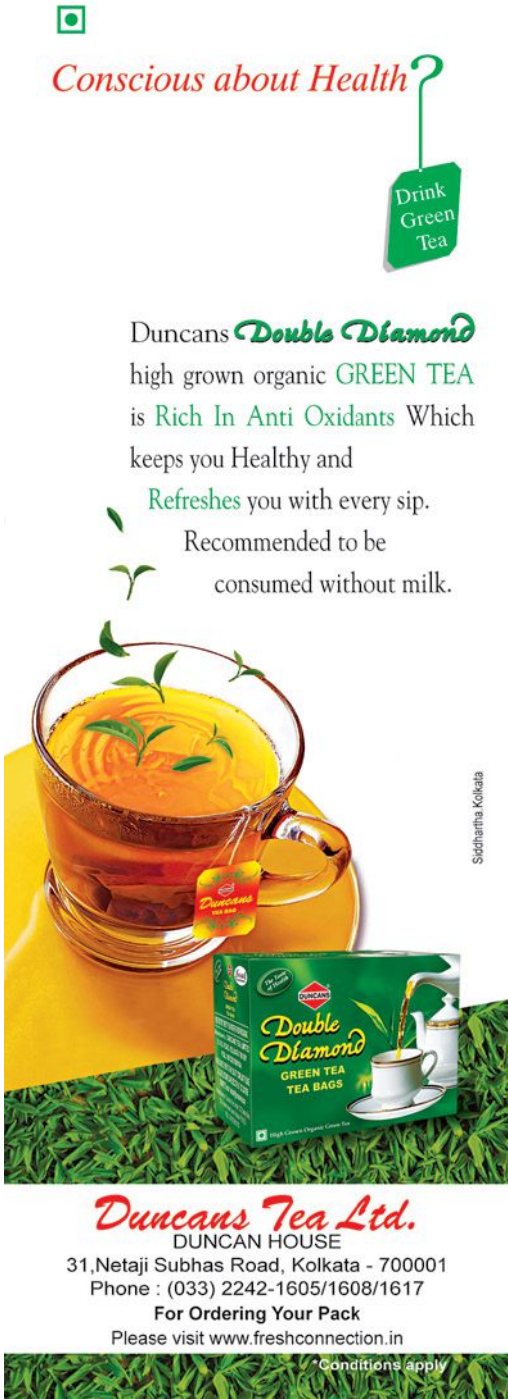


Perceived Danger: **SICK CO-WORKERS**
Real Danger: **THE STUFF THEY TOUCH** Viruses can spread to most office surfaces within 2 to 4 hours of a snotty colleague's arrival, a new study shows. Avoid touching common spots and wash your hands often.

Perceived Danger: **AIRPLANE TOILETS**
Real Danger: **IN-FLIGHT ARMRESTS** MRSA can survive there for 7 days, compared with just 4 on toilet flushers. Wipe both down with an alcohol-based disinfectant.

Perceived Danger: **THE MICROWAVE KEYPAD**
Real Danger: **A NEARBY SPATULA** Keypads didn't crack the top 10 hot spots in a recent study. What did: rubber spatulas—microbes hide in the joint between the handle and spatula. Detach and clean separately to kill bacteria.

Sources: James Barbaree, PhD, Auburn University, NSF International; Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene;
IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE



Beauty

Clean Cosmetics · Natural Cures

Root for Sustainable Skincare

Is your face scrub a danger to marine life? Sounds far-fetched, but it's true if you happen to use exfoliators that have plastic microbeads in them. A hazardous waste that causes immense harm to the environment, these tiny beads find their way into the food chain by escaping sewage treatment plants and eventually being let off into the ocean. Here, they pollute the water and endanger marine life when they're consumed by fish. "Replace products that use plastic microbeads with natural alternatives like apricot and walnut-based cleansers: both are rich in Vitamin E," says Dr Kiran Lohia, a Delhi-based dermatologist. Other safe exfoliants are rice powder, coconut husk and fruit seeds: try Himalaya Herbals Gentle Exfoliating Face Scrub, ₹130; The Nature's Co Walnut-Mint Foot scrub, ₹425.

—Pallavi Shankar



SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE



Colours Of Spring

Add a zing to your beauty routine with these new buys.

BY PALLAVI SHANKAR

1. Forest Essentials Hair Vitalizer: This Ayurveda-based product promises to stimulate hair growth and is enriched with extracts of bhringraj, hibiscus, amla, aloe vera, green tea and arnica. It may also prevent hairfall. ₹750

2. M.A.C. Viva Glam Miley Cyrus Hot Pink: A smouldering hot pink, with intense pigment and a glossy finish, this lipstick is a good choice for all skin tones. It is deeply moisturising and the selling price goes to M.A.C. Aids Fund, adding to the feel good factor. ₹1,450

3. Maybelline Colossal Kohl: The multi-tasking kohl and eyeliner is sleek, non-messy and promises 12 hours of smudge-free intensity. That it comes in pretty colours, besides black, is a bonus. Pick from crushed emerald, smoked silver and jewelled jade. ₹249

4. Bobbi Brown Limited Edition Cheek Palette: Highlight your cheekbones with two shades of blush and a pearlescent highlighter for that "just pinched" healthy glow. Dust the soft shade of blush and follow with a pop of bright pink on the apple of your cheeks. Choose from 3 shades: calypso, pink, berry. ₹3,260

5. Lotus Herbals Safe Sun UV Protect Body Lotion SPF 25: A blend of calendula extracts, vitamins B_3 and E with UV filter, it will save your skin from the harmful UVA/UVB rays. Also meant to protect skin from tanning, the body formula is hydrating and may be suitable for all skin types. ₹240

Do you clean your blush brush?

It's a germ hotspot, so keeping your make-up brushes clean is as important for your skin as using the right product. These brushes can harbour harmful bacteria leading to skin allergies and rashes. Here are 3 tips by Delhi-based make-up artist Vidya Tikari to keep your brushes clean and skin healthy.

1. Use shampoo and a clean sponge to disinfect your brushes. Another good option is to invest in a cleansing solution meant especially for cleaning brushes. Try Sephora Daily Makeup Brush Cleaner, ₹680, or M.A.C. Brush Cleanser, ₹900. **2.** An alternative to this is using a liquid sanitiser. **3.** After washing, sun-dry your make-up brush for 20 minutes to disinfect. *– Pallavi Shankar*





Coconut oil for smooth shave

Shaving hair is the most convenient hair removal method. To make it a nicks-and-cuts free affair, swap your shaving cream with good quality coconut oil. Coconut oil is a natural antimicrobial with skin soothing properties. Bonus—your skin will be hydrated and soft after you finish shaving.

75%

The percentage by which the monosaturated fatty acids in olive oil may promote youthful skin.

— Prevention.com

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Nutrition

Healthy Picks • Power Veggies

Citrus' Fat Burning Appeal

Did you know that a tangy-sweet fruit may help reverse some of the ill-effects of a high-fat diet? Turns out, having grapefruit regularly can trigger weight loss and counter the effects of calorie-laden foods, says a new animal study from UC Berkeley. In the 100-day study, mice fed a high-fat diet and given a solution of 50% grapefruit juice through the day gained 18% less weight than mice on a high-fat diet that drank water spiked with sweeteners with the same caloric content as the juice. Another find: the grapefruit-drinking mice showed a 13-17% reduction in blood glucose levels. Here's more: grapefruit is packed with immune-boosting vitamins A and C and also contains the anti-oxidant lycopene, which studies suggest may help reduce your risk of certain types of cancer.

SOURCE: PREVENTION.COM; IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE



See the Light on Mushrooms

Nearly 69% Indians have inadequate levels of Vitamin D, despite the plentiful sunshine. One of the reasons is that many of us are spending most daylight hours indoors. So what's the way out? Eat more mushrooms. They are a potent source of this multi-faceted nutrient. There's more: you can boost the D in mushrooms simply by placing them on a sunny windowsill, just 20 minutes can significantly raise the fungi's levels of Vitamin D.



Heavy breakfast = weight loss

Struggling to lose weight? Have a heavy breakfast, says a study published in the journal *Obesity*. The researchers divided 93 women into two groups; each ate 1,400 calories a day for 12 weeks. The breakfast group consumed a 700-calorie breakfast, a 500-calorie lunch and a 200-calorie dinner; the dinner group did the opposite, eating the largest meal at supper. Results: the breakfast-heavy group lost 11% of their weight, while big-dinner eaters lost only 4%. Of course, the extra calories didn't come from donuts! The meals were protein-rich with foods like wholewheat bread, low-fat milk and egg whites.

4.6

The number of years you age by drinking 590 ml of sugary soda every day, says a new study. Researchers found that soda drinkers had shorter telomeres, protective units of DNA on chromosome ends, associated with ageing—similar in length to those who smoke regularly.

Source: American Journal of Public health

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Not Your Ho-Hum Hummus

Lemony, garlicky mashed chickpeas make an addictively delicious dip and—bonus!—they're also a staple for the slim, finds research in the *Journal of Nutrition & Food Sciences*. Regular hummus eaters tend to weigh less and have smaller waists than those who don't dip. Kick plain store-bought hummus up a notch with these fresh stir-ins.



Spinach-Feta
Purée **75 g blanched spinach**. Add **3 Tbsp crumbled feta**.

Spicy Jalapeño
Purée **1 Tbsp diced jalapeño** and **2 tsp fresh green coriander.** Drop in **2 tsp diced red onion**.

Guacamole-Lime
Purée an **avocado** and **3 Tbsp lime juice**. Add **1 diced tomato**.

Olive-Pepper
Purée **2 Tbsp chopped roasted red pepper** and **¼ c pitted olives**.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH ANNE WARD; PROP STYLING BY KIRA CORBIN; FOOD STYLING BY KHALIL HYMORE

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Prevention
*India's **No. 1** Health Magazine*

Fitness

Power Up Weight Loss · Make It Count

Does Running Hurt Your Knees?

There's been a lot of back-and-forth on whether or not running makes you more prone to arthritis, especially in the knees, but new research suggests that pounding the pavement might actually protect your joints. Knee osteoarthritis (OA) is caused by cartilage breakdown, usually after an injury or years of stress. It makes sense, then, that running could cause OA. But after looking at the running habits and arthritis symptoms of nearly 2,700 women and men, researchers discovered that regular runners were 7% less likely than non-runners to develop knee OA.

That's probably because the more you run, the more likely it is that you're at a healthy weight, says study author Grace Hsiao-Wei Lo, MD. Past research has linked high BMIs with OA because excess weight puts more strain on joints. If you're overweight, focus on strengthening the muscles around your knee for better protection.

SOURCE: WWW.PREVENTION.COM; IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Your Body on Interval Training

Alternating between bursts of challenging exercise and mini recovery periods doesn't just make your workout fly—it'll also get you fit in a flash.

Metabolism

High-intensity bursts provide a bigger boost, burning more calories for up to 24 hours after you finish exercising.

Willpower

People are more likely to work out when they're given an interval routine, despite the intensity, research shows. (Recovery breaks: a good thing.)



Happiness

Like any other type of exercise, intervals perk up your mood—as long as you don't push past normal discomfort. Research shows that if exercise is too intense for too long, the feel-good benefits start to fade.

Weight Loss

Women who did a 20-minute interval workout 3 times a week for 15 weeks shed nearly 3 kilos more than those who stuck with 40 minutes of steady exercise.

Time Commitment

Fitting in interval workouts is easier: You can score the same health benefits in a third of the time.

Ability to Go and Go

Adding just one weekly session to your usual routine can up your VO_2 max* by 10%, making any activity feel easier.

* VO_2 *max is a measure of the maximum oxygen that one can use during intense exercises.*

POP CHART LAB

The #1 Way To Battle Belly Fat

You could devote your life to exercises that supposedly target your abs, yet still watch your waistline spread.

Try this smarter approach: daily weight training. Researchers from Harvard University found that men who did 20 minutes of weight training a day packed on the least amount of belly fat, compared to men who did cardio workouts or steered clear of the weights completely. Why did weight training lead to the smallest gain in stomach fat? **The research team theorised that working out with weights builds muscle mass and reduces fat levels all across the body, which gives metabolism a boost. Result? Less belly fat.** The study had its limitations: It included only men, and it focussed on prevention, not how to get rid of the stubborn stomach pooch you may already have. Still, it's welcome news if you're hoping to avoid belly fat in the future. And yep, it's more backup that crunches alone aren't the answer.



SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

15% is how much mindfulness strategies can help you stick with a tough workout. Instead of reacting to the familiar mid-exercise tiredness with "this sucks—I want to stop," try **"This is uncomfortable, but it's temporary. I can finish this workout."** Sounds suspiciously simplistic, we know, but damned if it doesn't work.

Source: Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise

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Family

Exams · Clean Kitchen · Baby Skin

Beat Exam Stress

Many of us have gone through it. We sit down to take a test and when we open the exam paper, we go blank. Blame it on stress. Cortisol released in response to stress impairs the speed of memory retrieval, says research. Some people are more prone to exam anxiety than the others. According to UK-based social research psychologist Martyn Denscombe, there are 4 reasons behind teens suffering exam anxiety. The educational or occupational consequences of the test result; their self-esteem that's linked with it; judgements from friends and parents; and fear of disappointing their teachers. >>>



SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

>>> The reasons seem to hold true for most children. With the upcoming examination, make sure you sit your kids down and discuss realistic expectations so that there isn't excessive pressure on them. Here are some more expert-backed strategies to help kids cope with this stressful phase.

1. Help them organise: Physical clutter creates emotional clutter and adds to stress. Help your child organise her study space, making sure that she has all the resources she needs by her side. However, avoid piling everything—if she is preparing for an English test, for example, she can keep her Maths books away. Help her prepare a timetable. Ask her to do one thing at a time,"says Ann Simi John, consultant, clinical psychologist, Max Heathcare, Gurgaon. It's good idea for kids to study at a desk sitting on a comfortable chair, says Dr Yash Gulati, director & HOD, Orthopaedics, Joint Reconstruction & Spine Surgery, BLK Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi. Adjust height so that the child's feet rests comfortably on the floor.

2. Let them take breaks: Reserach shows that studying for extended hours is not effective. "While every child is different, studying for 50-90 minutes at a time is recommended, says John. Let him take a 10-15 minutes break in between, and a half hour break after every 4-5 hours of study time. "This allows the brain to process and absorb information better," says John. Let him to use this break to snack or stretch. Encourage him to go for a walk outdoors. Oxygen stimulates blood flow keeping the brain sharp. Physical activity is also de-stressing.

3. Give them power foods: The brain consumes glucose when you study—you need to refuel it with healthy foods. "Foods rich in Omega-3s, magnesium and iron are great for students. Give them nuts and fresh fruits to snack on, feed them fatty fish like salmon and tuna, lots of leafy greens, beet root, kidney beans and wholegrains," says Kolkata-based nutritionist Heena Nafis.

4. Put them to bed: The less sleep one gets, the more one's cognitive abilities suffer, says a study from Finland. Research from the University of Lübeck, Germany, also suggests that the brain sorts and stores new memories during sleep. When kids are sleep deprived, they won't be able to retain or recall information as well as they normally do. Make sure your kids get 8 hours of sleep daily.

—Kashish Dua and Kathakoli Dasgupta

Blanked Out?

Drink water and breathe deeply and slowly. This'll rehydrate the body and stop the effects of stress hormone cortisol.

Dabur Vatika PREMIUM NATURALS

INDIA TODAY Woman

Some people don't need hair to look beautiful.



What the world deems a big win is actually the beginning of a bigger battle. A battle with yourself. A battle against eye-raising looks from strangers. Even though with grit and determination you make Cancer leave your body, but it leaves some everlasting marks. Chemotherapy changes your look. The world can see that physical change but only you alone can really feel – a changed you. That's the birth of bravery inside. Bravery with which you defeated Cancer. Bravery that has made you proud. That's your medal of honour. Bravery, that's more beautiful than beauty itself.

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Baby Skin Care

Your infant's soft skin is super sensitive. Here's advice on how to care for it.

Massage Moments

Massage can act as tactile stimulation—and what better than mom's touch. Wash your hands and use gentle strokes, says Dr Neelam Kler, chariman, Pediatrics, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi. She recommends cold pressed coconut or olive oil. Give a massage half to one hour before bath.



Bath Basics

Keep baby's bath short and quick. "Use warm to tepid bath water. You may not need soap—except to clean up private parts," says Dr Preeta Mathur, consultant, Pediatrics, Columbia Asia Hospital, Pune. Wrap your baby in a soft towel and dab dry. Use a lotion only if you find the baby's skin dry, says Kler. Try Pigeon Baby Milky Lotion, Cetaphil Baby Lotion, Sebamed Baby Lotion. Talcum powders aren't necessary.

Dress Right

Dress baby in soft hosiery/cotton clothes that are buttoned on the front. In winter, woollen clothes should be worn over it to avoid skin rashes.

Diaper Drama

Diaper rash is caused by dampness combined with irritation. "Check your baby's diaper every 2-3 hours, remove soiled ones immediately, pat her bottom dry and let her spend some diaper-free time to let her bottom breathe," says Kler. Use cloth nappies as far as possible. Wash them in a gentle detergent, rinse well and let them dry in the sun. Also, keep the area hygienic. "As far as possible, clean the area with a gentle stream of tepid water each time your baby poops. Else, use a soft, damp cloth to wipe it clean," adds Mathur. Let the area dry before you tie on the nappy. "Diaper rash cream is prescribed to treat a rash," says Mathur.

Products Pro

Babies need minimal products because their skin is naturally soft and clear. "Get perfume-free, pH-neutral products," says Kler. "Anti-bacterial soaps and products, unless prescribed, are a no-no." Watch for allergic reactions (skin rash) even when using babycare products. *—KDG*

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

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How Clean Are Your Dishes?

You make sure you have safe drinking water. But what are you using to clean the utensils you eat out of? The July, 2014 report by Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation show that approximately 11% of water samples collected in India were contaminated. Washing your utensils with this water can put your health at risk. Experts say that you can combat these germs by using hot water (at temperatures 70°C or above). It's most convenient to do it in a dishwasher, but if you don't want to invest in one, soak dirty dishes in a tub of hot water with liquid soap. Hot water helps to get rid of the grease that harbours harmful bacteria. Scrub clean and rinse with running water at the highest tolerable temperature.

—*Kashish Dua*

BE A HEALTH *Role Model*

Keep the tone of your conversation about healthy living with your children positive, says a study called EAT (Eating and Activity in Teens) in *JAMA Pediatrics*. Researchers found that parents who talked about weight, body size and shape were more likely to have kids who later developed unhealthy eating habits, including extreme dieting, taking laxatives and purging. However, parents who talked to their kids about healthy eating (avoiding direct mention of body size) had kids who were less likely to develop such habits. Researchers also emphasise the importance of parent modelling (engaging in family physical activity together, healthy snacking, and so on) in tandem with conversation to effectively promote good health habits.

185 That's how many times more BPA (an endocrine disruptor) gets absorbed when you touch a paper receipt after using hand sanitiser (that breaks down the skin's protective layer). This level of exposure is linked to obesity, heart disease and diabetes. *Source: PLOS One*

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Introversion Makes You More Creative

If you consider yourself an introvert, this will give you reason to smile. Turns out introverts are often more creative than their extrovert and more gregarious counterparts. Psychologist Laurie Helgoe, PhD, assistant professor at Davis & Elkins College, West Virginia and author of *Introvert Powers* says that because extroverts are keenly attuned to social norms, it can put them at a disadvantage creatively. "Introverts, by not being so heavily influenced by what everyone else is doing, can be more open to novel solutions," Helgoe says. Psychologists suggest that introverts can be more creative because they're comfortable spending time alone, a critical ingredient for creativity.

SOURCE: WWW.PREVENTION.COM;
IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE



The Surprising Sign Of Dementia

Not feeling like your usual, upbeat self? Your cloudy mood may be a sign of a bigger storm brewing. Depression appears to be one of the earliest symptoms of dementia, shows a new study published in *Neurology,* conducted over a period of 7 years on 2,400 healthy adults (all over age 50). After 7 years, the people who'd started showing signs of dementia were twice as likely to have reported feeling depressed at the start of the study.

It's possible the underlying causes of depression may be wrapped up with those of dementia and Alzheimer's, the study authors say—though they're quick to point out that hasn't yet been proven. In fact, many of the non-dementia sufferers—nearly 15%—also showed signs of depression at the start of the study. So while feeling down in the dumps is worth keeping an eye on, it's far from a sure sign the disease will settle in. To know more on depression, read *Out Of The Woods*. p 106.



20%

Depression Risk Cut by Exercise

According to new research published in *JAMA Psychiatry*, those who get a sense of euphoria after a workout, 3 times a week, lower their depression risk by nearly 20% versus those who don't exercise.



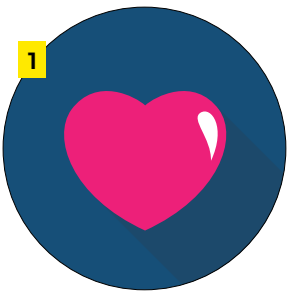
Keep Calm and Do Yoga

Doing yoga regularly not only keeps you calm, but it may also help you recover faster following a stressful situation, according to a new study published in *BMC Complementary & Alternative Medicine*. Researchers found that those who practised yoga for 90 minutes or more a day were more resilient to stress than those who did yoga infrequently or not at all. For the study, participants were "stressed" with mental arithmetic tests and different forms of breathing. As this was happening, their oxygen consumption was measured. Not only did the yogis' oxygen consumption return to normal faster after being stressed, but they also used less oxygen, suggesting more efficient metabolic systems.

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Get Some Me Time

As women, we know how much time we spend juggling the different roles we play. On International Women's Day, relax and indulge yourself.

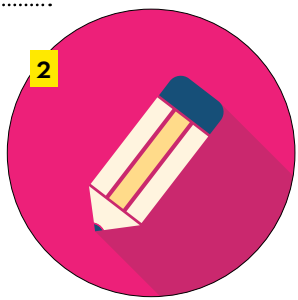


Go on a date with yourself

"Include yourself on the list of people you take care of. Take some time to do something just for yourself today, something you may have wanted to do for a while but didn't have time for, or anything that makes you happy," says Seema Hingorani, Mumbai-based psychologist and author of *Beating the Blues*. Go for a special meal alone, book a spa session, read a book, indulge in retail therapy, or whatever catches your fancy.

Write yourself a love letter

A study at York University showed that writing yourself a comforting letter every day for a week can make you feel happier for up to six months. Pen yourself a pick-me-up, but write it from the perspective of a loving friend or relative. Coming back and reading your letter from time to time will only reinforce the effect.



8TH MARCH
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Invest in your friends

Spend the day with friends you haven't met recently. Not just a mood-lifter, meeting your friends could shrink your waistline as well. When mice were moved from an environment where they had few pals to one they shared with 15 rodent roommates, they shed 50% of their belly fat in 4 weeks, reports *Cell Metabolism*. The more engaging environment caused white fat—the stuff that causes pudge—to turn into brown fat, a type that burns calories (humans also have both kinds). More research is needed to determine why this happens, but stepping up your social life might pay off on the scale.
—Sweta Pal

Be Pain Free Down There

Postpartum changes in the vagina and how you can get it back into shape.



PROF (DR) ABHA MAJUMDAR *Director and Head, Centre of IVF and Human Reproduction, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi*

Send your questions to ***askprevention@intoday.com***

While going through normal delivery, the baby travels through the birth canal (cervix and vagina) to eventually come out into this world through the introitus (entrance of the vagina). During childbirth, all these structures are stretched extensively to allow the baby to pass through. As the birth canal dilates to accommodate the baby, the structures around it—the bladder and rectum, for example—are also stretched by being pushed outwards. The weight of the baby along with strenuous pushing weakens the pelvic-floor muscles, which support the internal organs. When this happens, the bladder, uterus, or bowel or all three can shift from their normal positions. Besides this, the skin between the vagina and anus gets bruised and might tear or be cut (episiotomy) by the doctor to allow the baby out. An episiotomy or vaginal tear might hurt for a few weeks. Extensive tears might take longer to heal.

The most common vaginal symptoms and discomfort a new mum may feel include:

- Pain and burning around the introitus leading to painful urination and defecation.
- Heaviness or bulge in the vagina leading to urinary incontinence—sometimes even faecal leakage.
- Piles (enlarged veins) may appear around the anus and rectum, usually caused by pressure from constipation during pregnancy or from pushing during labour. These may sometimes bleed while passing stools.
- It is not unusual for women to feel that their vagina is open and appears looser and drier than usual.

All these problems usually tend to get resolved on their own with time. In the meantime, these tips may help reducing pain and discomfort.

- Place an ice pack between the sanitary pad and

wound to reduce pain, inflammation and swelling.

- Pour warm water over the vaginal opening if passing urine hurts.
- Press a clean pad firmly against the wound while bearing down for a bowel movement. This will help to ease pain in the stitched area due to pushing stools.
- Pour a gentle stream of water every time while using the toilet to keep the area clean and hygienic.
- Sit on a pillow or air filled ring if sitting gives discomfort.
- Soak into a warm tub while taking a bath to soothe pain. Applying cold packs also numb the sting and help ease the discomfort while the haemorrhoids heal.

TACKLING INCONTINENCE

Pregnancy and birth stretch the connective tissue at the base of the bladder and can cause nerve and muscle damage to the bladder or urethra. This might cause leaking of urine on coughing, straining or laughing (also known as stress incontinence). Fortunately, this problem usually improves within 3 months. In the meantime, do Kegel exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. Tighten pelvic muscles as if stopping the stream of urine. Initially the muscles don't appear to move but it is important to go

Pour a gentle stream of water every time while using the toilet to keep the area clean and hygienic.



on trying and they will start working. (It's no different from training your abs or biceps—you want to make your pelvic muscles taut.) Try it for 5 seconds at a time, 4 or 5 times in a row. Work up to keep the muscles contracted for 10 seconds at a time, relaxing for 10 seconds between contractions. Aim for as many sets of 10 repetitions a day at any time during the day, for instance while watching TV or chatting with friends on the phone.

ENJOYING SEX LIFE

Sexual intercourse can be resumed as soon as one desires it and it is comfortable. If delivery causes tearing, or if an episiotomy is done, sexual intercourse should be delayed until the affected area heals to avoid pain. Using Kegel's exercise while having sex may help make it more enjoyable for both partners, especially in the initial phase after child birth, when the vagina is still lax.

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Answers • **Dr Chandra M Gulhati | Drug Expert**

Take as the Rx Says

Crushing a tablet and opening a capsule before taking them can pose a risk.

Some patients, especially the elderly and children, find it difficult to swallow tablets or capsules. It is, therefore, not uncommon to have tablets crushed and capsules opened to mix the drug powder/granules into food and liquids. Some others may suck or chew the pills before swallowing. But before you do that, pay heed to this.

Many pills are supposed to release medicines at a specific rate in a specific location. Immediate release tablets are designed to disintegrate quickly in the stomach and be absorbed into the blood stream. Other tablets, such as aspirin and omeprazole (used for heart burn), have special acid-resistant coating (enteric coating) that pass through the stomach but dissolve in the small intestine allowing the release of drugs. Crushing these drugs strips off the enteric coating, rendering them ineffective.

Then again, certain medicines, such as alendronate, risedronate, ibandronic acid, that are used in the treatment of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women, if sucked or chewed can cause severe erosion of the food pipe. They need to be swallowed whole with plenty of water.

Some pills known as sustained release (or controlled release or long acting or extended release) are designed to release medicines slowly over 12 to 24 hours enabling once or twice daily dosing for convenience. Crushing such a tablet, opening a capsule or chewing it can result in overdosing, under dosing or injuring the lining of the mouth, stomach or intestine. Digoxin, used for congestive heart failure, anti-coagulants like dabigatran and antihypertensives diltiazem or nifedipine fall in this category. Crushing digoxin tablets can cause irregular heartbeats, or even death. Crushing sustained release pills of nifedipine results in too rapid release and absorption, causing severe drop in blood pressure that can be fatal.

When taking a prescription drug, you should never suck or crush a tablet, open a capsule or chew without first asking your doctor. Take it only as advised.



DR CHANDRA M GULHATI *is* Editor, *Monthly Index of Medical Specialities.*

Send your questions to ***askprevention@intoday.com***

Is there anything such as having a high desire quotient? I feel, of late, it is me who initiates sex more often.

Mahua, 36
KOLKATTA



You probably want to know if there is anything like 'having too much or too little desire'. 'Too little' or 'too much' of anything doesn't exist in isolation—it's always relative. If you are able to manifest your sexual desire in ways you enjoy, and your partner also enjoys it, the question of comparing your 'desire quotients' doesn't arise. However, when desire is not welcomed by either of you, it may feel like too much, and if it takes too long to reappear, it may feel like too little.

It is often considered that men have higher levels of sexual desire than women but this kind of comparison is baseless and of no practical value. What happens in real life is that levels of desire fluctuate over time—as you are now experiencing—even within the same person, and may be affected by many factors such as one's state of physical and mental health, fatigue, stress, how one feels about oneself and sex, and so on. What can also happen is that with time, as women get more comfortable with their own bodies and sexual desires, they may find themselves feeling and expressing more desire than their male partners. This does not mean that they are 'over-sexed' or that their partners are losing interest in them. It may call for a gentle chat about it (not whining or an attack on your partner), an adjustment in timings, a break from the busy-ness of everyday life, or some deliberate flirting and seduction, because the banality of humdrum co-existence can leach away desire. And in case you are still the one initiating sex most of the time, with him willingly participating, maybe he has discovered the joys of lying back and enjoying it?

RADHIKA CHANDIRAMANI
is founder of TARSHI, an organisation that works on issues of sexuality. She is a trained clinical psychologist.

Send your questions to ***askprevention@intoday.com***;
Visit the FAQs page at ***www.tarshi.net*** or call 011-26472229, Mon to Fri 9.30 am to 5.30 pm

From the Heart Doc • **Dr JPS Sawhney**

Time and Your Heart

A protection plan to save your heart when it's most vulnerable.

Believe it or not, there are times and situations when the chances of a heart attack rises dramatically. If you or someone you know has a history of heart trouble, here's when to be watchful.

1. IN THE AM

Heart attack and sudden cardiac death occur most frequently in the first few hours of waking up. According to Harvard researchers, the risk of heart attack increases by 40% in the morning. Why? Most likely due to a surge in adrenaline and other stress hormones to help us get ready for the day's challenges. Moreover, BP drops several points as we sleep, and it rises on awakening. Besides, dehydration in the morning may also make blood thicker and harder to pump. All this taxes the heart.

- **Stay Safe:** Get at least 7-8 hours of sleep. Keep some room to take it easy after you wake up in the morning. If you work out in the morning, don't rush into exercise. Spend time warming up properly to take the load off your heart and drink enough water too. If you are on medication for heart disease, check with your doctor the best time to have them. It may be a good idea to take your medication at bedtime so it's effective when you wake up or take it first thing in the AM.

2. ON MONDAY MORNINGS

Studies show that heart attacks are more common on Monday. The elevated risk is often blamed on the mental stress associated with the beginning of the work week. It may also have to do with the fact that people tend to indulge during the weekend and hit the snooze button late. And loss of sleep leads to increased adrenaline activity as well as release of proinflammatory molecules.

- **Stay Safe:** Have a relaxed weekend. Try to maintain a



DR JPS SAWHNEY,
Chairman, Department of Cardiology, and senior consultant cardiologist, at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital (S.G.R.H), New Delhi.

Send your questions to ***askprevention@intoday.com***

regular sleep-wake cycle—even on weekends. Also, don't overindulge in heavy meals that may constrict blood vessels and put pressure on the heart.

3. DURING STRENUOUS ACTIVITY

While regular exercise is recommended to keep the ticker healthy, a sudden burst of activity may cause a heart attack. This is because, one, the patient isn't accustomed to that kind of effort and skyrocketing stress hormones, causing BP and heart rate to jump. This is the same reason why sex can trigger a heart attack too. But take heart, the risk from sexual activity is very, very low—one in a million.

■ **Stay Safe:** Exercise regularly, but increase the intensity gradually. If you are a heart patient/have suffered a heart attack, please follow your doctor's advice on physical activity.

Showing up at the emergency after a heart attack at night, on weekends or during holidays is associated with a 13% higher risk of death than arriving during regular working hours.

4. AFTER A FIT OF RAGE

The risk of suffering a heart attack increases nearly five-fold in the 2 hours following an angry outburst, says a study in the *European Heart Journal*. It's not a rare angry outburst, but frequent episodes of rage that can lead to an accumulation of risk.

■ **Stay Safe:** Control your anger. Find out what's causing it and get those triggers out of your life. Indulge in calming activities like meditation. Consult a psychologist, if needed.



SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

5. DURING A BOWEL MOVEMENT

Straining while passing stools increases pressure in the chest, slowing the return of blood to the heart. The risk compounds in those who've recently suffered a heart attack.

■ **Stay Safe:** Eat lots of fibre, drink plenty of water and don't exert pressure to force the stools out.

6. IN COLD WEATHER

Low temperatures tighten the arteries, restricting the blood flow and reducing the oxygen supply to the heart. Besides, the heart has to work harder because blood vessels constrict to reduce loss of body heat. Also, we sweat (out the salt) less, so BP may go up. Moreover, cold and flu can cause inflammation that can trigger a heart attack.

■ **Stay Safe:** Keep warm. Exercise indoors, if it's too cold to venture out. Check BP regularly; you may need to tweak your BP medication accordingly. If you are over 65, consider a flu shot and pneumococcal vaccine.

—As told to Kathakoli Dasgupta

Answers • Dr Rekha Sheth | The Skin Doc

How can I take care of dry patches on my face that refuse to go away even after using a ton of moisturiser?

Dhaani Singh, 41
NEW DELHI



Patchy skin is a common problem, not only for dry skin but also for some oily skin types. In this case, the first step should be to identify the cause. Here are some:

1. Unsuitable Products. Using a harsh face wash disturbs the pH balance of the skin. Take this test: if your face feels dry and stretchy immediately after using your face wash, it is an irritant reaction. If your skin feels dry after 30 minutes of washing, it is likely to be an allergic reaction. An irritant reaction means the product is unsuitable for you, but an allergic reaction happens to sensitive skin types. In both cases, changing your face wash is a must. The same logic applies to your moisturiser and foundation, so do this test and change them if needed.

2. Sun Allergy. There is a peculiar kind of sun allergy called PolyMorphic Light Eruption (PLE), where you get patches of dryness that get aggravated after sun exposure—after 24 to 48 hours. They subside without any help, but with repeated sun exposure they recur in the same pattern. Therefore, avoid long hours in the sun, and always wear a hypoallergenic sunscreen.

3. Eczema or Dermatitis. These skin conditions come with redness and itchiness and may result in patchy dryness as well as flaky skin. It needs a dermatologist's supervised treatment.

How to Tackle it. If you have patchy and uneven skin, use a mild face wash and moisturiser or cream. You could try Cetaphil, Sebamed, Epilight, Emolene, etc. For sunscreen, Cetaphil, Avene, Anthelios, PhotoDerm—with SPF 50, may help. If nothing works, consult a dermatologist.

DR REKHA SHETH *is a leading cosmetic dermatologist in Mumbai. She is founder-president, Cosmetology Society of India and runs Yuva, a successful chain of skin clinics.*

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Answers • Clint Fernandes | Make-up Pro

I want to update my dresser for spring and summer. Please suggest what colours and styles to follow.

Sai Netke
37, MUMBAI



The colours for summer are fresh and bright this time around—think aesthetics of florals and pastels. Here are some tips to make you look your very best this season.

Keep it fresh. The make-up is natural and breezy with a pop of bright colour. Keep your skin clean and matte by using an oil-free but hydrating moisturiser before you start applying make-up. Then, use a light concealer to cover blemishes, followed by a compact or translucent powder. Keep the blush light and work on either your eyes or lips. In the daytime, a winged eyeliner or coloured kohl is sufficient. For lips, coral and pink colours are good options. Use pastel shades on nails but avoid pastel eye shadow as it could look pasty if not done correctly. Instead, use apricot and peach colours for eyes.

Evening look. A bronzer dusted lightly around the cheeks and jaw line gives a sophisticated look to your face. Copper tones work very well for dusky skin and a light gold bronzer complements lighter skin. Lips can be played up with deeper tones of lipstick in dark red, burgundy Marcela (a popular colour this summer) and magenta—keep the textures relatively matte and avoid too much of gloss. Also, if you are doing your lips in a bright shade, then go easy on your eye make-up.

Sleek and straight. This season, poker straight hair is making a huge comeback. Besides being a popular style, it's easy to maintain and you just need a hair straightener to get the look right. Nevertheless, wavy or frizzy hair never really goes out of fashion too, keep your hair well-groomed and healthy. If you want to keep it tied, try the textured fishtail braid—it always works.

CLINT FERNANDES *is a leading make-up and hair artist in Mumbai.*

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Prevention
TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

Guest Column • **Dr Suparna Ghosh-Jerath**

Family Food Diary

Good nutrition should be a way of life for everyone at home, at different stages of their life. Here's how to keep them healthy.

There is no one-size-fits-all plan for the good health of your family. What we need is a life-course approach to nutrition for families, so that each member, at different stages of their life, can eat healthy.

For your baby. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months provides complete nutrition to the infant. Breast milk has the correct balance of nutrients like carbs, protein, healthy fats, vitamins, minerals, plus protective factors, "tailor-made" for each child. In fact, the first milk or "colostrum" is often called the first immunisation for the baby. Promote breastfeeding and empower women who are pregnant around you with knowledge about breastfeeding. Stress, lack of emotional support and doubt can cut down breast milk production. While feeding, holding the baby close, looking at her and listening to her cry enhances breast milk secretion. Even an undernourished mother can breastfeed provided she has someone to support her. Breastfeeding is protective, economical, and leads to better IQ in children and prevents them from future chronic diseases. It is a good way for the mother to bond with her baby. It also helps moms get back into shape and prevents certain types of feminine cancers.

For your child. Children learn to eat by experimenting with the food around them. A conducive environment with natural foods like cereals, pulses, meat, milk, healthy fats, colourful fruits, leafy greens, flavours of natural herbs and a palate adjusted to enjoy low-salt foods will set the foundation of good food habits.

For your adolescent. This is a period of growth spurt. There is an increased demand for energy, protein, minerals like calcium, iron and vitamins. At the same time, it is



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a period when our youngsters are going through a phase of rebellion. Peer pressure influences food behaviour, and body image issues may lead to food fads. Be a friend to your adolescent and understand her concerns. Offer her space to take decisions, and then step back. Stock healthy snacks like roasted chana, dried fruit slices, nuts, seeds, wholewheat cakes, etc. Make your meals interesting with dips and relishes like hummus, mint, coriander and amla chutney, avocado and hung curd dips, and so on. Offer the option of healthy beverages like coconut water, buttermilk and green tea. Encourage the use of natural foods as opposed to processed ones.



SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

For you and your partner. Adulthood is a period when our metabolic rate stabilises; we gradually step into a life with lesser physical activity. Weight management becomes the key factor in achieving wellness. This is the time to practice moderation in eating. Your platter should now include nutrient-dense foods such as colourful fruits and vegetables, complex carbs like coarse cereals, pulses, and good fats from nuts and protein from lean meat, fish and chicken. Over indulgence with alcohol consumption should be checked.

For your parents. By this stage, their metabolic rate slows down and the ageing process leads to biological changes, affecting the nutritional status. A diet that takes care of these changes and protects the organs from oxidative stress is desirable. Also, encourage them to eat with the entire family, help them spend time outdoors, and include some exercise in their routine as these steps are good for bone health. Bring back traditional cuisine with healthy fat and more herbs. Make simple changes in the consistency of the food cooked for the elderly as they may have trouble chewing. In our culture, food is a great medium of bringing back the feeling of togetherness. It is time to give back and nurture those who have nurtured us for so long.



Clove

A common kitchen spice, clove offers a range of health benefits, from treating aches to asthma.

A popular, fragrant spice—clove, or *lavang* in Hindi, comes from an evergreen tree cultivated in south India, especially Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Clove is the dried flower bud of this tree.

THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS

Cloves are referred to in Ayurvedic texts as bitter and aromatic, with digestive, antispasmodic, diuretic, warming and rejuvenating properties. They are useful in treating toothaches, dental caries, intestinal flatulence, colic, cough and asthma. Modern research on clove oil has also shown its effectiveness as an anti-inflammatory agent that has made it an important healing aid for dental issues. It's most valuable component happens to be eugenol—the subject of many studies for its potential for preventing environmental toxicity. Besides, clove is an anti-oxidant full of essential nutrients like manganese, calcium, Omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins K and C.

HOW TO USE

Clove oil offers an easy natural cure for many health problems. To treat toothache, dip a small ball of cotton in clove oil and press it on the part of the aching gum for relief from pain. Also, massaging the gums with clove powder reduces swelling, pain and bad breath. For those suffering from low appetite and bad digestion, it's a good idea to drink water boiled with cloves on a regular basis; this works equally well for gastric pain and bloating.



DR RAMESH PK *is CMO and Superintendent at Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala, Ayurvedic Hospital & Research Centre, New Delhi.*

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SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

My daughter is 11. What should I keep in mind to help her handle puberty?

Preethi, 39
HYDERABAD



Puberty is marked by physical and emotional changes that precede and accompany the start of periods. A girl can enter puberty between age of 10 and 15. Heredity influences the age of puberty, as does lifestyle and environmental factors.

The visible changes include hair growth in the arm pits and pubic area, enlargement of breast, increase in height and slight weight gain (especially around the hips), mild vaginal discharge and pimples. Kids also become emotionally vulnerable and pay more attention to their looks. Sexual attraction is also normal. This is also when peer pressure begins to build up. As a mom, you play a big role in helping your daughter become a healthy, strong and confident person. Talk to her in a matter-of-fact way about these changes and encourage her to ask questions.

Hygiene: Taking a bath daily—twice a day in summer and during menstruation—can help stop body odour that accompanies puberty. If she has too much underarm hair, help her trim it regularly. Hair removing creams contain harsh chemicals that may harm her tender skin. Ideally, waxing should be started after age 16. Speak to her about the right method of using a sanitary pad and the importance of changing it every 6 hours, more frequently if needed.

Undergarments: Get cotton undergarments which she should change daily. Help her choose a comfortable and right-size bra. Depending on her growth, your daughter may need a bra as early as 11-12 years of age—and not just when she's taking part in sports.

Food: The growth spurt means that your daughter may need additional calories. Make sure she gets it through healthy foods. Also ensure she drinks plenty of water. This will cleanse her system and prevent body odour.

DR ISSAC MATHAI, *MD, SOUKYA & Prevention's alternative medicine expert.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY: RAJESH RAI

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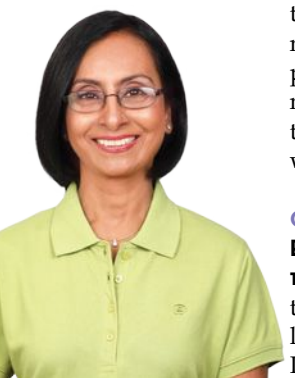
Answers • **Nisha Varma | Weight-Loss Coach**

Banish Knee Pain

After any injury, surgery or joint strain, a conditioning programme to strengthen your knee helps you get back to normal activities faster.

Knees are a major weight-bearing joint of the body and prone to injuries because of stress transferred from the foot, ankle, hip and lower back. It is important to choose an activity which suits your body type and takes remedial measures to realign joints. At the same time, you need to strengthen and stretch the muscles around the knee to keep it stable and strong.

The following guidelines are generic and will work as rehab post injury as well as help in preventing further damage to the knee joint. Of course, you should attempt these in consultation with your doctor. Caution: if you experience pain in your joints while attempting any of these exercises, stop right away. Muscles may feel sore, but not joints. Breathe deeply at all times, even as you hold a posture. Any patient with knee problems should stick to non-weight bearing cardio like cycling or swimming until the knee is completely healed. Do a ten-minute walk as a warm up and then start on the exercises.



NISHA VARMA *is a Reebok Master Trainer based in Pune.*

Send your questions to ***askprevention@intoday.com***

QUADRICEPS STRENGTHENING

Equipment: Mat, a hand towel

1. Sit or lie face up on a mat with both legs extended. Flex the toes of the right foot and lock the knee joint. Lift the leg 10 inches from the floor and hold for 10 slow counts. Repeat on the other side. Do 6 reps.

2. Lie face up on the mat, keeping both legs straight. Roll a hand towel and place it just below one knee. Press the towel down using the back of the knee, lift the heel off the floor keeping the foot flexed at all times. Hold for 10 seconds and release. Repeat on the other side. Do 6 reps.

OUTER AND INNER THIGH STRENGTHENING

Equipment: A soft beach ball, level 2 theraband.

1. Lie face up on the mat, bend both knees, feet 6-8 inches apart, firmly grip the ball between the knees. As you exhale, lift both hips off the floor. Your navel should be pulled towards the spine and hip muscles should be tight. Your spine should be neutral. With the hips held high, squeeze the ball as hard as you can to activate the inner thigh muscles or the adductor muscle group. Hold for slow 10 counts. Repeat 10 times.

2. Tie the theraband around the thighs, just above the knees. The band should be fairly tight. Lie face up on the mat and keep the feet hip width apart. As you exhale, lift both hips off the floor following the same guidelines as above and press the knees outwards and hold for 20 slow counts. Repeat 10 times without letting the hips fall or tilt. All the pressure should be felt in the hips and the outer thighs.


Lift both heels to strengthen the calves.

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

CALF STRENGTHENING

1. Stand near a chair and place both hands lightly on the back of the chair. Lift both heels off the floor as high as you can and hold for 10 slow counts. Repeat 6 times. As you get stronger, lift your bodyweight on single leg.


Grip a beach ball between your knees as you lift your hips off the floor to strengthen the outer and inner thighs.

HAMSTRINGS AND GLUTES STRENGTHENING

1. Lie face down on the mat and rest your forehead on your hands. Press the hip bones down and as you exhale, lift one leg off the floor as high as you can without losing contact with the floor. Foot should be neutral. Squeeze the hip and activate the back of the thigh as you use these muscles to do the work. Hold for 10 counts. Repeat on the other side. Do 6 reps. Make sure both the hip bones are touching the floor as you lift the leg. There should be no tilt in the pelvis.

2. Turn over and lie face up. Bend the knees and place feet 6-8 inches apart. Pressing the heels down, lift hips off the floor. Once you find a stable position, lift the right leg off the floor only as high as the left knee. At this stage, your hip may want to drop or tilt to one side, but activate the left hip and realign the hip. Hold for 10 counts and release. Repeat 3 times to begin with and go up to 6 reps on each side.

Yoga For Kids

This ancient practice has huge physical and emotional benefits for juniors.

Let's face it. While it may seem as if children have it easier, there are many conflicts and everyday pressures they face constantly. Sports and games are a good way to relieve stress, but yoga can help them become calm and learn how to act or react to stressful situations. Plus, it's fun.

Yoga is beneficial for children of all ages. It seems to be especially helpful for kids with special needs. A study from Columbia University found that after a 6-week programme that included yoga, more than 90% of the participating children ages 6 to 11 with ADHD improved their academic performance. Researchers suspect that yoga spurs an increase in dopamine, the brain chemical linked to attention, movement and learning. Levels of this hormone is low in kids with ADHD. A 2012 study published in the *American Journal of Occupational Therapy* found yoga helped improve school performance and sustained attention in children with autism. Parents may notice how yoga benefits their kids, but the best judges are the kids themselves. Children who have practised yoga tell teachers and parents that they are able to concentrate better during the day, focus better on their activities and pay attention to their tasks—all great endorsements.

Here are a few reasons that will make you consider signing your kids up for a lesson.

1. Yoga strengthens the whole body. Because the asanas are done standing, sitting and lying down, different muscles groups are utilised which enables the child to be aware of his body and its functions. It also helps kids improve their posture. Besides yoga postures improve balance and motor coordination in kids.

2. It helps children become more balanced, emotionally. A German study found that children who were trained



GUNJAN KOCHHAR
is a certified Hatha, integral and Kundalini yoga teacher.

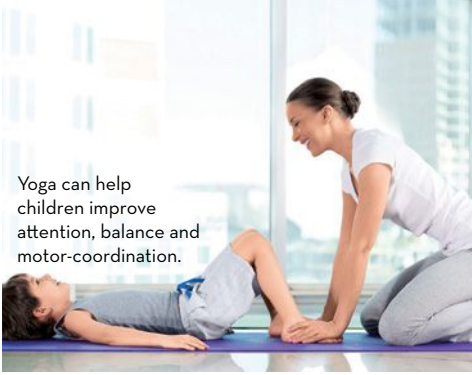
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in relaxation techniques by using breath exercises, imagination journeys and yoga increased long-term emotional balance, reduced fears, and decreased feelings of helplessness and aggression.

3. It boosts self-esteem and confidence and helps children learn on an experiential level. A University of California study of children in a Los Angeles school found a 20% increase in the number of students who felt good about themselves and a 6% increase in classroom discipline scores after regular yoga classes. This study also indicated that students who had high participation in yoga class had fewer referrals or discipline problems.

4. It promotes a relaxed body and mind. In a study by Vivekananda Kendra Yoga Research Foundation in Bengaluru, 2 groups of students were selected to either participate in yoga (concentrating on relaxation and awareness) or games (focussing on physical activity). Compared to students not enrolled in the programme, both groups showed a substantial drop in the resting heart rate and significantly lower breathing rates. Moreover, because yoga improves focus and concentration, studies say that it helps kids in the classroom and improves learning.

To help kids medidate: sit with your legs crossed, close your eyes, and chant "I am happy, I am good" for 5-10 minutes.



Yoga can help children improve attention, balance and motor-coordination.

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Here are some asanas kids can try. Make sure they do them under the guidance of a certified teacher.

1. Dhanurasana This is good for developing confidence and focus in children.

2. Adho Mukha Svanasana It helps stretch the entire body and is good for expanding energy level.

3. Vriksasana This posture helps children build balance and alertness.

4. Tadasana Again, good for balance, it may also help increase height gradually. The posture helps keep the spine straight and erect helping the child walk taller.

5. Sukhasana Children can learn to sit straight and get the feeling of meditation.

6. Sethubandhasana It strengthens the core.

7. Bhujangasana Since kids spend hours sitting at the desk, this asana helps give relief to their back.

8. Virbhadrasana Helps to stretch the shoulders.

9. Ardhasarwangasana This pose improves flexibility, helping kids do various activities better.

10. Savasana It helps to relax and de-stress kids.

Answers • **Dr Shelja Sen | Motherboard**

Love Across Generations

Grandparents are not stand-ins for parents, they play a huge role in loving and taking care of grandkids. Here's how to nurture the bond.

One thing that strikes me nowadays is that there is nothing like a typical grandparent! As a family therapist, I like to involve grandparents as much as possible in the work we do with kids and families. I see sporty grand dads showing the little ones how to kick the ball around like Pele, or health-conscious grannies who pump iron in the gym or have joined a jazz dance class. Then there are stay-at-home, "let's take it easy" ones who are quite happy watching TV or going for a little liesurely walk in the park.

More and more moms are opting to go back to work after their babies grow up. In the absence of any other alternative quality care, grandparents are choosing, or at times being roped in, willingly or unwillingly, to take care of their grandkids. Therefore, it stands to reason that when we talk about parenting, we need to also include the perspectives and issues that grandparents face.

We know that grandparents play an important role in a child's life. Recent research shows that close grandparent-grandkid relationships are linked to fewer depressive symptoms for both parties. And when the kids are young, this relationship is mediated by you. Watch out for these family games typically played between parents and grandparents

Stop the love triangle. There might be some level of conflict between the mother and grandmother and the child invariably gets dragged into it. "I love you much more than your mother does, she's always scolding you,' "Your grandmother is spoiling you, that's why you throw so many tantrums." The child ends up feeling torn apart and struggles with divided loyalty.

Beware of polarisation. As battle lines are drawn, each side can end up becoming more and more rigid and polarised about their position. The grandmother would insist that she can't refuse her grandchild' demands, while the mother gets



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Send your questions to ***asktheprevention@intoday.com***

increasingly strict with the child to prove her point. This leaves the child vulnerable to getting hurt, caught in the crossfire.

Displace negativity. As the tussle becomes more chronic, and intensifies, the mother might try hurting the grandmother by lashing out at the child. Conversely, the grandmother might neglect the child just to spite her daughter-in-law.

CARE AND CONNECT

Kids thrive when adults in the family come together to take care of them. Grandparents matter. So as parents be a little more thoughtful and adjusting, and let them have fun together.

Sort out differences. Dragging the other person down may give a temporary sense of triumph, but every score you settle is a negative score for the child. If your differences are too deeply entrenched, talk to your child about it in a mature, matter-of-fact way. Assure him that though you have differences, he is dearly loved by both and you'd never let him get involved in the tussle.

Share responsibilities. Each family is different in terms of of grandparent involvement. If the grandparents are actively involved in childcare, they may want to have a say in decision making. But at the end of the day, it's parents who are responsible for the child. Decisions like study time, amount of screen, bedtime, diet are best left to parents.



Get them closer. I would also urge parents to get distant and aloof grandparents more involved in their child's life. Request the grandmother to teach the kids how to make the"world's best chocolate cake" or the grandfather to teach them chess or help with Maths. If children are older, give them responsibilities like serving dinner to grandparents, teaching them how to use Facebook, taking them shopping, and so on. It might not seem much (be prepared for moaning and groaning), but these are moments that both will eventually cherish forever. As one kid told me about his granddad (who he was learning chess from), "I never knew my granddad was so cool. He rocks!"

Get distant grandparents more involved in your child's life. Kids thrive when adults in the family come together to take care of them.

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Answers • **Dr Prabha Chandra | Head Coach**

Elders and Betters

Your relationship with your parents changes with time. Ensure that your parents, children and you, find joy in each other's company.



DR PRABHA CHANDRA *is professor of psychiatry, NIMHANS, Bengaluru. She specialises in mental health problems related to pregnancy and postpartum.*

Send your questions to ***askprevention@intoday.com***

She adored her parents and wanted them to visit her and as often as possible. However, every time they came, there was a pattern. The initial few weeks would be fun with catching up, gossiping and reminiscing about the time gone by. Mum would take over the kitchen and dad would entertain the kids with stories about the family.

However, after a few weeks, she would find herself getting irritated by her mother's constant preoccupation with cooking and food; the children did not seem that enthused about their grandpa's stories and she'd get an uneasy feeling that her parents, too, were bored and unhappy. Occasionally, if she was too tired after a hectic work day, she would even snap if her mother asked her something twice or misplaced an important letter. Sounds familiar?

As parents age, our relationship with them changes. While earlier they would look after us, with time, the roles are reversed. This role reversal is not always easy for parents or their adult children. What makes it tougher is that it often coincides with our own struggle as an adult as we handle the increasing responsibilities at work and young children at home.

There are a few realities about elderly parents we must accept, to be better able to renegotiate a new relationship with them. To begin with, don't expect them to be the same as they were 20 years ago. They are growing older, are physically and mentally more vulnerable, and not as fit as they were. In your mind, they are your young parents, who loved you unconditionally and gave you whatever you asked for. However, now they're probably dealing with BP, diabetes or ageing bones, are more fragile physically and emotionally and may not be able to walk briskly enough to pick up the phone or answer the doorbell.

Secondly, do not have unrealistic expectations about their cognitive abilities. While many parents are agile, will solve the Sudoku or the daily crossword, many others may be a little slow in processing information. Names may not come easily to their mind and your instructions may not be followed precisely. How can you ensure an easier relationship with your ageing parents?

Follow a routine. Remember that your parents like routine and are not too happy about sudden change or surprises. If you are expecting guests or want to take them out for dinner, give them prior notice and enough time to get ready, so you don't get impatient if they're late.

Develop a daily ritual. If they stay with you, share a cup of tea in the morning or discuss the daily news or go for a short stroll (after your brisk walk). If they stay away from you, sending them an email or WhatsApp, sharing jokes or a picture of your child, will make them feel connected with you.

Share their stories with your kids. Encourage your children to interact with them. Reminiscence is a therapeutic tool which serves dual functions. It jogs their memory and enables all of you to reflect on significant shared events from your past. It can be educative for your children and enhances your own bonding with your parents.

Encourage independence. Instead of pushing them to do something they are resisting, like using the walker or sleeping with the lights on, discuss your concerns about their well-being. Ensure that you allow them space and let them do as much as they can. Assign specific meaningful roles—like fetching milk from the store, planning the evening menu or helping you with your bank work. This will make them feel valued.



Ensure that you allow them space. Assign specific meaningful tasks, so they feel valued.

Reserve me-time. Just because they are staying with you, don't let your life revolve around them. Take time off for yourself and let them know that you need to do some things on your own. Recognise your unresolved issues with your parents which might resurface when they are being difficult. If it interferes too much with your relationship, see a therapist.

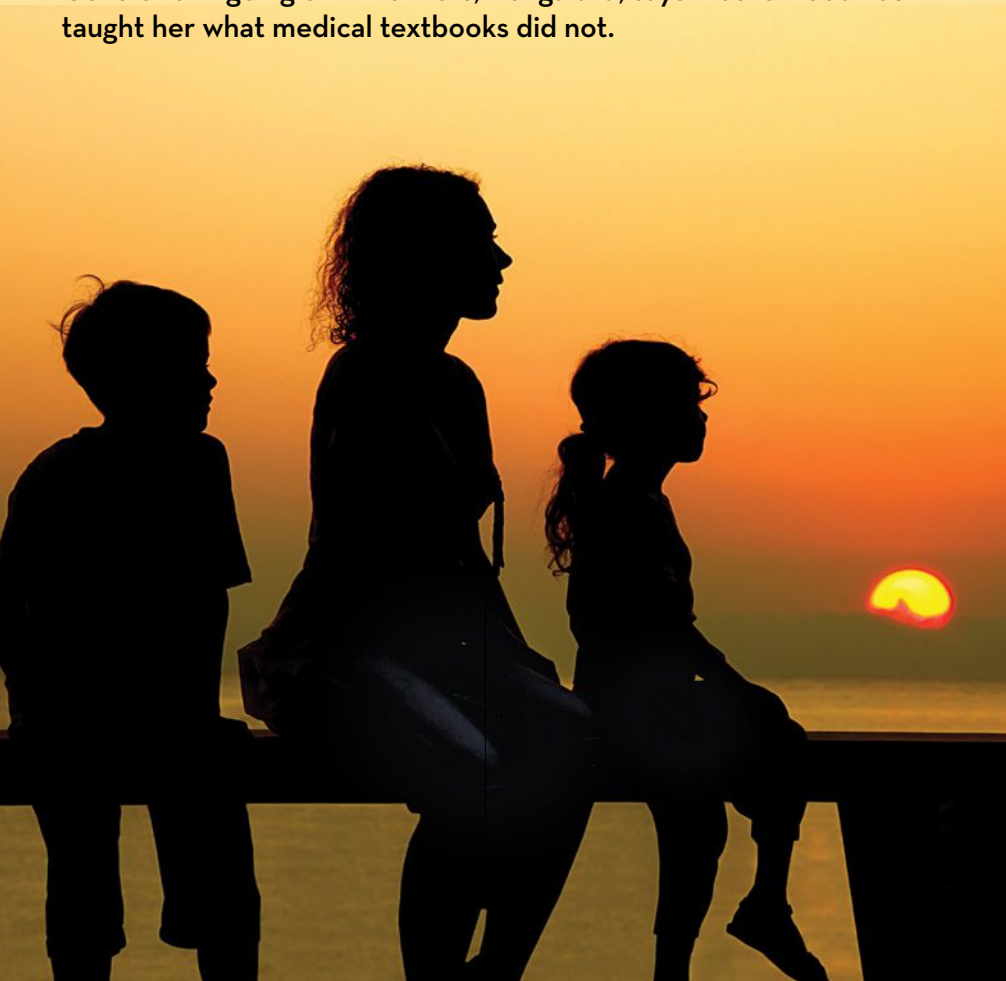
Finally, remember that your parents are a great repository of knowledge and experience. Seek their opinion and wisdom whenever you can.

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Better Than Ever

"My Kids Make Me a Better Doctor"

Dr Soumya Hegde, **consultant geriatric psychiatrist at Nightingales Centre for Ageing & Alzheimers, Bengaluru, says motherhood has taught her what medical textbooks did not.**



I started my practice in 2001. I am a geriatric psychiatrist and many of my senior citizen patients have memory problems and are extremely hard to deal with. Like other psychiatrists, I too would give their caregivers advice from the books I had read and the lessons I learnt from my professors in medical college. Though I've always loved what I do, back then, it was just work, for me—patients, appointments, diagnosis, therapy, prescriptions, follow-ups.

In 2009, I had my first child and as every woman would agree, motherhood changed me forever. Joyous as I was, when my child began to grow and explore the world, we found that he was on the spectrum and would need special care and attention. Looking back, I realise how my special child opened a window in my mind and helped me "see".

For the caregivers of patients who have cognitive problems it is extremely challenging to deal with the patients' everyday problems and it is often difficult for an outsider to grasp.

SETTING OFF ON A NEW PATH

When the elderly face cognitive issues, a lot of things change at home—the old order changes, they may begin to depend on their children or spouses to help them with their daily needs. It is also a very challenging time for the caregivers. A number of times, caregivers come to me exasperated with dealing with their spouse/parent. They feel angry at their parents and guilty at the same time, for harbouring these unpleasant feelings. They are frustrated that they have to raise their voices or 'disrespect' their parents in order to make them follow certain instructions. It is a tough situation and often difficult for an outsider to grasp.

However, as my son grew up, I was faced with similar situations at home. A child with special needs presents special challenges, and these have to be dealt with creatively, with a lot of patience, and with ever more love and empathy. At work when caregivers' poured out their troubles to me, I could now relate to their situation. The cases had moved out of medical textbooks and assumed a real persona, with all the nuanced and invisible challenges that made each of them unique. I began to observe how my patients were similar to children—they wouldn't listen to reason, were hard to control and everything had to be according to their preference.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

My experience of bringing up my son gave me an opportunity to try the techniques I had read about in books and was taught by my seniors. But with a difference. Now, before I gave out advice to the caregivers of my patients, I would think whether or not it was practical. I began to draw from my own experiences of motherhood

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while treating patients. For instance, I reassured my patients' caregivers not to feel guilty about the little white lies that we have to tell patients in certain unavoidable circumstances. If an elderly person wakes up in the middle of the night and demands to be taken back to his/her childhood home, the only solution is to lie and tell them that you will do it in the morning. Like a mother, caregivers have to think on their feet and make promises at times, just to calm the patient down. Similarly, sometimes agreeing with the elderly is the only way to calm them down, logic and reason can be addressed later when they are ready to listen. In geriatrics, there is only so much that medication can do. The rest has to be done by communicating with the patient, by listening and giving them time.

Cognitive issues such as Alzheimer's is not curable and the treatment is multi-dimensional. One has to take help from a geriatric psychiatrist, a speech therapist, occupational therapist, neurologist and a qualified nurse to treat a patient, something that children on the spectrum need as well. Taking care of all these issues often take a toll on the caregiver who has to remain understanding and calm. I now know that keeping it all together, all the time, can be a difficult feat.

MOVING AHEAD

Three years ago, my daughter was born. My son is now enrolled in a special school. While the initial



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struggle of coping and understanding has settled to some extent, it has led to some inner engineering which I have greatly benefitted from. All the advice for my patients now comes from within—from the experience of juggling work and bringing up two children. I can understand what caregivers mean when they say it has been hard on them and they have no time for themselves. I know how difficult it is. Yet, it is the most rewarding experience. My children have made me a better psychiatrist and my patients and caregivers respect and seek my advice even more, because of this.

—As told to Sweta Pal

Dry Eyes

PROBLEM SOLVED!

BY AMANDA FIRST AND BARI LIEBERMAN

Itchy, burning, and/or scratchy eyes, sometimes accompanied by blurred vision or tearing, dry eyes is of two types—temporary and chronic (dry eye syndrome). Left untreated, the latter can lead to infection and in severe cases, loss of vision.

Temporary dry eye has many causes. Exposure to air-conditioning, or cold wind; staring at a screen for hours; even eating spicy foods. Chronic dry eye usually results from inadequate amounts of meibum—an oily substance that prevents tears—from evaporating quickly.

Start Here!

STOP STARING

Blink more often.

When you stare at a computer, smartphone, TV, or even a book, you blink less often. In such situations, consciously blink more to spread your own tears evenly, says Dr Mahipal Sachdev, chairman, Centre for Sight, New Delhi. Try "full blinks" (the upper lid touches the lower) and squeezing your lids together.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LAURA DOSS; HAIR BY KRISTIN HEITKOTTER FOR ORIBE PRODUCTS FOR CELESTINEAGENCY.COM; MAKEUP BY ANNIE ING FOR NARS COSMETICS FOR CELESTINEAGENCY.COM



Get A Windshield

Think sunglasses.

Alleviate occasional symptoms by taking precautions to protect your eyes, such as shielding them with sunglasses in windy areas. "Wind causes tears to evaporate faster than they are made," says Dr Joanne Shen, MD, an ophthalmologist with the Mayo Clinic, adding that wind can also increase inflammation.

30%

Fewer eye problems including dry eyes in those who practised a yoga programme that included guided relaxation and 10 minutes of "eye yoga" (trataka). The exercises include moving the eyeballs up and down, from side to side and in circles.

TAKE UP THE HEAT

Hot compress helps.

Make your own compress by filling a small cloth bag with uncooked rice. Twice a day, heat it in the microwave for 20 to 30 seconds, carefully test its heat level for comfort and place it over your eyes for 5 to 20 minutes.

CONTACT LENS CARE

Switch to gentle solutions.

All-purpose contact cleaning solutions can irritate your eyes, and wearing your contacts too much makes it hard for your eyes to breathe. Switch to a gentler solution like Bio True from Bosch and Lomb, and take a break every few days to wear your glasses instead.

GETTY IMAGES



CHANGE YOUR DIET

More Omega-3s

These good fats promote the production of tears, says Dr Ajanta Chakrabarty, consultant ophthalmologist, Manipal Hospitals, Bengaluru. You can munch on nuts and seeds or pop a supplement.



Massage

Use your fingers.

Done correctly, massaging your upper and lower eyelids can keep the meibomian glands flowing. Your ophthalmologist can teach you the proper technique, which involves rolling your finger or a cotton swab in small circles around each eyelid.

MEDICAL TREATMENTS

Try Artificial Tears

These OTC drops lubricate the eyes and may reduce the dry, scratching feeling, says Sachdev. However, if you find yourself reaching out for these more than 4 times a day, you should ask your doctor for a permanent solution.

Punctal Plugs

Used for extremely severe cases, these painless devices, no bigger than a grain of rice, are inserted into the tear ducts to trap tears before they leak out.

Restasis

Prescribed when dry eyes are caused by severe allergies, these drops contain cyclosporine, which decreases inflammation, says Chakrabarty.

Antibiotics

Ciprofloxacin, an antibiotic ointment is often prescribed by doctors to reduce infection in the meibomian glands, one of the most common causes of dry eyes.

–With inputs from Sweta Pal

LEFT: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE; RIGHT: CHAD KLEITSCH/CORBIS

10 WAYS TO Survive THE Sneeze Season



If you're a seasonal allergy sufferer (10-20% Indians are), you probably already have a few tricks to avoid triggers, like not running outside when pollen counts are high or keeping the windows closed and blasting the AC. You've probably tested out-there "cures" that worked for your aunt's best friend's brother (but alas, not for you). And from an Rx or two, you've gotten relief—plus pesky side effects. To find solutions that actually work, we scoured the latest research.

1. Cut down stress

In a 2008 experiment, researchers at Ohio State University College of Medicine found that allergy sufferers had more symptoms after they took an anxiety-inducing test, compared with when they performed a task that did not make them tense. Stress hormones may stimulate the production of IgE, blood proteins that cause allergic reactions, says study author Janice Kiecolt-Glaser, PhD. If you're under stress, get enough sleep. A sleep deficit can worsen both allergy symptoms and stress, she says.



2. Take meds pronto

Meds that block histamines work best before you're even exposed to allergens. "Starting them a couple of weeks before the onset of allergy season is effective," says Dr Komarla Nagendra Prasad, allergy physician, Bangalore Allergy Centre, Bengaluru. If you are undergoing immunotherapy or desensitisation, you must start the procedure much before, as this is a long-drawn method of treatment, he adds.

3. Use hot water

If you find yourself sniffling in bed, crank your washing machine to the hottest setting. In a South Korean study, laundering cotton sheets at 140°F killed 100% of dust mites, while a luke warm wash destroyed just 6.5%. Some machines have a "sanitise" setting for this. Use hot water if your machine lacks the option of heating water internally. (Caution: This temp can scald in 5 seconds.) Also keep them out in the sun to dry. If using linen stored away for a long time, wash or sun it to rid of mites and moulds.



4. Avoid alcohol

Alcohol can raise the risk of perennial allergic rhinitis by 3% for every additional alcoholic beverage consumed each week, Danish researchers found. One potential reason: bacteria and yeast in the alcohol produce histamines, chemicals that cause telltale allergy symptoms like a stuffy nose and itchy eyes. Avoid alcohol when your symptoms are acting up, says allergy expert Dr Shubnum Singh, dean, Nursing, Allied Health, & Wellness Programs, Max Healthcare, New Delhi. She warns that having alcohol with anti-histamine medication can potentiate the sedative effect of the drug.

SOURCE: WWW.PREVENTION.COM; ALL IMAGES SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE



5. Run away

Going for a jog is the last thing you feel like doing when you're stuffed up, but here's why it might be worth it: A moderate-intensity workout significantly reduced allergy symptoms in one study from Thailand. Exercise may slow down the body's release of irritating histamines and other biological mediators, the same way some medications do. If there's too much pollen or pollutants outdoors, get on the treadmill.

6. Have meds in the evening

One time not to forget your allergy med? Before bed—so the medication will be circulating in your bloodstream early the next day. Symptoms such as sneezing, weepy eyes and runny nose peak in the morning, says Dr Kaushik Das, consultant ENT, AMRI Hospital, Kolkata. Choose regular (instead of non-drowsy formulas) for extra help falling asleep promptly. If your doctor has prescribed only once-a-day pill (not twice daily dose), check the best time to have it, advises Dr Achal Gulati, director professor, Department of ENT, Maulana Azad Medical College, Delhi.

7. Keep plants outdoors

Your innocent orchid could bring tears to your eyes. More than 75% of hay fever sufferers are allergic to at least one common houseplant, found a Belgian study. Allergens in plant sap can diffuse into the air and set off your sniffling. Though any potted greens can be trouble, researchers found that ficus, yucca, ivy, palm, orchid and fern varieties are most irritating to allergy-prone people.



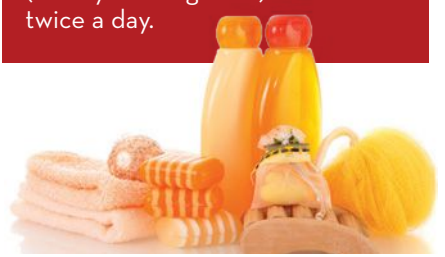


8. Be wary of friends who smoke

With their numerous toxic chemicals and irritants—cigerettes are nasty for everyone, but allergy sufferers may be especially sensitive, according to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. In fact, one Japanese study of teenage students found that more than 80% of those who came from homes where family members smoked heavily showed signs of nasal allergies. Even if you don't hang around smokey bars or other areas, particles on the clothing of smoking friends or co-workers can pollute the air in your home or office. Smoking (and passive smoking) damages cilia that inhibits mucous production in the upper respiratory tract that can help expel the pollen. The pollen therefore settles in causing sniffles. Besides, smoking lowers immunity worsening symptoms, explains Gulati. Smoking cessation can undo the damage to cilia in just a few days.

9. Guard your Gut

Taking a good-bacteria pill helped people toward fewer allergic episodes, according to one analysis of 7 studies. Researchers think that probiotics in the gut may help regulate the immune system and counteract the inflammation that causes allergic symptoms. The strains and amounts of bacteria that were used varied from study to study, but most were from the Lactobacillus family (*L. acidophilus*, *L. paracasei*, and *L. bulgaricus)*, typically taken in doses of 2 billion to 5 billion CFU (colony-forming units) once or twice a day.



10. Take a shower

Allergy sufferers would benefit from a quick rinse as soon as they get home after being outside for a while, says *Prevention* advisor Dr Arun Agarwal, director professor, Department of ENT, Maulana Azad Medical College, Delhi. That's because hidden pollen particles can get trapped on your body, hair, clothes and shoes—continuing to trigger symptoms. If you're prone to pollen allergies, slip off your shoes, throw your clothes in the hamper, and shower as soon as you get home to avoid dragging particles all over your home.

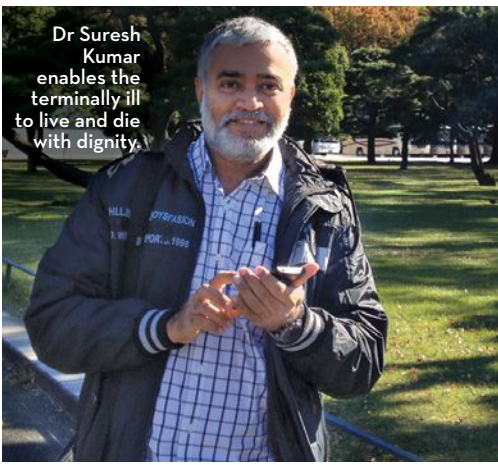
—with inputs from Kashish Dua

Community Care

We all have the right to die with dignity. The Neighbourhood Network for Palliative Care has been helping patients do just that for the past 20 years.

BY VAIDEHEE DESHPANDE

While treating patients with advanced cancer, Kozhikode-based anaesthetist Dr Suresh Kumar realised that drugs could only treat their pain—a more comprehensive approach was needed to address their non-medical psychological and social needs. Along with his colleague Dr MR Rajagopal, in 1993, Kumar started a clinic in the district to address the needs of terminal cancer patients. Today, this initiative has grown into a people's movement—the Neighbourhood Network in Palliative Care (NNPC), which now covers all victims of advanced cancers, incurable neurological disorders, extreme cardiac or respiratory ailments and AIDS.



Dr Suresh Kumar enables the terminally ill to live and die with dignity.

The concept

Palliative care aims to improve the quality of life of patients with terminal illnesses and their families, by addressing their medical and non-medical problems. What sets apart Kumar's programme is that it is based entirely on community care—the community is made responsible for caring for their terminally ill. This results in making palliative care more affordable and accessible. "Hospitals are not the best places to die," says Kumar. "Besides, long hospital stays with little chance of a cure translate into a financial and emotional liability." Kumar wanted to change this, and the attitude towards death. "Everybody has to die eventually. Why not die with dignity? This is a universal issue, so it makes sense to involve the community to take care of its elderly and terminally ill individuals." Back in 2003, Kumar started the Institute of Palliative Medicine (IPM) in Kozhikode, a venture whose backbone was an army of medical and nursing professionals and volun-



teers. Currently, it is the only institute focussed on community-led care. The IPM has in turn created the NNPC, and it serves as the link between volunteers and patients.

How it works

The backbone of community based palliative care units, are its volunteers. Recruitment is done using different platforms—say small NGOs, religious and political groups, even district administration.

The volunteers are trained extensively by the IPM. Training involves an initial sensitisation session, followed by two units: an introductory unit, and another 2-day unit where volunteers are trained primarily in patient communication and taught how to answer difficult questions raised by patients. They are also taught to document a patient's condition and to support the associated medical staff.

Generating funds is another component of the programme. All the money to run a centre is generated by the community itself, although initially there might be some input from NGOs or the local government. The usual way of raising money is through micro donations (as little as ₹3 a day).

Patient rehabilitation is another goal. Even a chronically ill patient may live for several years. Volunteers try to provide them with a sense of purpose by teaching them a skill. For example, they make small toys or umbrellas which the volunteers sell, bringing money back to the patient.

The NNPC is based entirely on community care—the community is made responsible for caring for their terminally ill. This makes it more affordable and accessible.

Growing by leaps and bounds

The growth rate of the community care units has been exponential. From a tiny, single unit with 2 volunteers in 1993 in Kerala, today there are over a thousand community-based palliative care units across Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Manipur. Kumar has shared the model with countries like Thailand, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, where such centres have come up.

Personally, for Kumar, the journey has involved a change in mindset. "As a doctor, I felt cheated when one of my patients died. Now, all of our patients die." What keeps him going are the patients themselves and their families. "A sense of having played a role in ensuring each patient departed with a sense of peace with oneself."

Foot Soldiers

You've stepped out of your winter boots and the feet demand some TLC. Here are the right tools to help you deal with your foot woes.

BY PALLAVI SHANKAR

1. Scholl Foot and Nail Cream: Formulated with urea for deep penetration into your skin, this cream also has the moisturising benefits of glycerin that locks in essential moisture. ₹180

2. O.P.I Pedicure Hydrating Foot Mask: Your feet deserve a good mask too. Made with menthol for a cooling experience, it cleans as well as hydrates foot skin, including tanned areas. ₹Rs 600

3. Neutrogena Norwegian Formula Foot Cream: This thick and concentrated formula for dry and rough heels promises to leave your feet noticeably softer. Use just a small amount on your feet. It spreads evenly and is thick and moisturising. ₹1,044

4. L'Occitane Almond Foot Care: This lightly scented cream promises to repair damaged skin. Made with moisturising shea butter to nourish dry skin and mint essential oil for a refreshing feel. It has a powdery finish, so you can wear your high heels immediately after application. ₹900

5. Sally Hansen Cuticle Massage Cream: This is an intensive cuticle treatment that deep conditions cuticles with its rich formula of apricot extracts. Using a cuticle cream also increases blood circulation. ₹550

6. Iraya Aloe & Vetiver Revitalising Foot Gel: Pick this cooling foot gel to soothe swollen feet and to regain a feel-good feeling. Another plus: vetiver has antiseptic properties. ₹695

7. Oriflame Feet Up Deodorising Foot Powder: Keep your feet dry and smelling nice with this absorbent and deodorising foot powder. Bergamot oil is refreshing and lime has antibacterial properties to keep your feet fresh and odour-free. ₹169

8. H_2O Plus Pumice Foot Scrub: The sea-based brand's grainy scrub comes with the benefits of volcanic pumice and menthol that removes dry and rough skin including calluses, gently. The blend of sea ingredients: wakame, sea lettuce and sea fennel, clean-up without drying your skin, claims the brand. ₹1,100

9. Kaya Advanced Foot Care Cream: This is formulated with glycolic acid and olive oil to heal cracked feet. Bonus: it may also help heal rough knees. For cracked feet, use it 2 to 3 times a day; for softening just once a day will do. ₹290

10. The Nature's Co Foot File: A foot filer is essential to maintain smooth feet skin. Try this wood-based tool, it helps you remove rough, dry and dead cells, with a promise to be gentle on your feet. ₹125

These products have been validated by Prevention *experts.*

EXTREME RIGHT: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE


1.
Scholl
Foot & Nail Cream
2.
O·P·I
PEDICURE
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mask
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3.
Neutrogena
foot cream
4.
AMANDE
SOIN DES PIEDS
FOOT CARE
L'OCCITANE
EN PROVENCE
5.
Sally Hansen
CUTICLE MASSAGE CREAM
With Apricot Extract
6.
iraya
7.
oriflame
feetUp
Deodorising
bergamot & lime
Foot powder
75g 2.5 oz.
8.
h2o+
SPA
TARGETED CARE
9.
kaya
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kaya
skin clinic
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THE NATURE'S CO.



Fix your annoying beauty issues with these easy solutions, to take you from grumpy to happy.

DEALING *with* BEAUTY bummers

When irritating beauty issues like brown spots, hangnails and ingrown hair pop up, your first instinct is to try to get a handle on the issue immediately. And as it turns out, taking matters into your own hands can be quite effective—if you know how to do it correctly. Find out what it takes to turn around these situations as soon as they start.



THE ISSUE: *Hangnails*

YOUR SOLUTION: Carefully nip these dead pieces of skin with a cuticle trimmer (which, ironically, you should never use on your actual cuticles), and prevent future hangnails by soaking your fingers in warm coconut oil. Drenching your nails in oil deeply hydrates them. Wrap your hands in a warm, wet towel (heat in the microwave and let cool for a few minutes so they won't burn your skin), to enhance penetration. Do this once a week.





THE ISSUE:

Brown Spots

YOUR SOLUTION: Getting rid of brown spots, entirely, is a long-term project that calls for diligent use of brightening ingredients like liquorice and kojic acid, anti-pigmentation creams and probably a few laser treatments, too. But if you're looking for a quick fix, artfully applied make-up is your best option. "First, dab a concealer of the shade that matches your exact skin tone on the spot area with a fine lip brush. Follow up with a compact or translucent powder on top; it will stay put and won't move from its place," advises Clint Fernandes, Mumbai-based celebrity make-up artist and *Prevention* advisor.

Spanking Clean

For a healthy and allergy-free skin, keep your make-up brushes clean and replace them with new ones every 6 months.

THE ISSUE:

Ingrown Hair

YOUR SOLUTION: If you have ingrown hair, that telltale redness and swelling is due to a bacterial infection. Use soothing lavendar oil on the affected area and do visit a dermatologist. "But if you have inflamed skin with folliculitis in just one or two places and if it's not giving you too much grief, then calm your skin with an aloe vera and calamine-based lotion," says Dr Rohini Wadhwani, dermatologist and medical director, Skin Essentials, Mumbai. " To prevent further infection, avoid picking or squeezing the ingrowth," she cautions.



Tooth Fairy

Eat apples and sugar-cane to detox your teeth naturally, especially after having staining beverages like colas, coffee and black tea.



THE ISSUE:

Flat Hair

YOUR SOLUTION:

If you've used every volumising product (read volumising shampoos, mousse, hairspray) on the shelves and still can't get your hair to do anything but lie flat as a pancake on your head, try this root-lifting blow drying trick: "First, work a palm full of mousse from your hair roots through to the ends, then flip your head over and dry your hair upside down and away from the scalp," says Delhi-based celebrity hairstylist Rod Anker. Hair should be slightly damp before you flip it back up. Voila, so much volume and bounce!





THE ISSUE:

Yellow Teeth

YOUR SOLUTION: Brushing with a paste made of baking soda and water a few times a month removes superficial staining and whitens teeth by a shade or two. "The graininess neutralises stains and polishes teeth but isn't abrasive enough to wear down your enamel," says Dr Nandita Grover, consultant endodontist and implantologist, Max Healthcare, New Delhi. Just don't do it more frequently than that—baking soda is too abrasive for your every day brush. "For an immediate fix, flesh-toned lipstick shades like caramel and cappuccino work well, and so does gold and copper tones. Avoid contrasting colours like bright reds and magenta, it will make the yellowness more prominent," adds Fernandes.



Tangle-Free Hair
Use a good quality comb to detangle your hair and replace it with a new one when the bristles become rough and crooked.

THE ISSUE: *Hair Breakage*

YOUR SOLUTION: When you step out of the shower, gently squeeze and blot the hair (never rub!) with an old cotton T-shirt instead of a towel. It will still soak up excess moisture, but won't cause breakage. When it's time to detangle, remember this: being rough can cause the cuticle (the outer layer of the hair shaft) to fray, exposing the fragile inner shaft and making it more likely to snap. Detangle with a wide-tooth comb, working your way up from the end of your hair, using the least amount of strokes as possible. Secure with a gentle hairband, if you're pulling it back. The pressure of a super-tight band around a ponytail can wear away at your hair's cuticle and cause the strands to break. Also, avoid combing your hair when it's wet.

Nail It
Keeping your nails moisturised with a nail cream is a good idea. Pick a urea and almond or coconut-based nail cream for deep penetration. To prevent yellow and brittle nails, use acetone-free nail lacquers.

THE ISSUE: *Nail Fungus*

YOUR SOLUTION: When you start seeing spots, soak your nails in a solution of one part vinegar and five parts water—fungus can't live in an acidic environment which the vinegar provides. A saline solution also provides a hostile environment for fungus, reduces excess perspiration, and softens skin so antifungal medicines can penetrate deeper. But if the issue persists, see your doctor, as the spots could indicate a more serious problem. "This condition is often associated with nail ingrowth, so it's best to schedule a meeting with your dermat. Until then, keep your feet clean and dry and use an anti-fungal powder," suggests Dr Rekha Sheth, *Prevention* advisor.

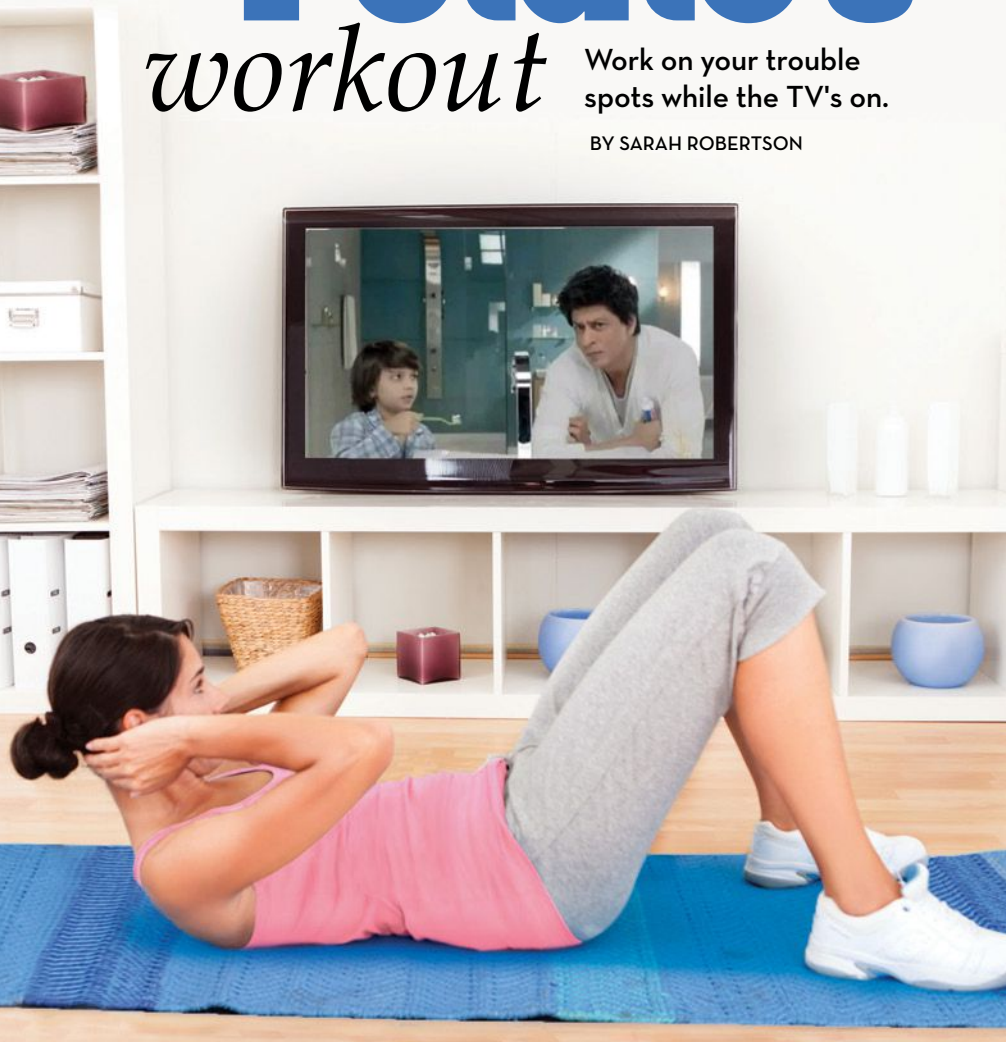
—Inputs by Pallavi Shankar

SOURCE: WWW.PREVENTION.COM; ALL IMAGES SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

The Couch Potato's *workout*

Work on your trouble spots while the TV's on.

BY SARAH ROBERTSON



Snuggled in for your favourite show? Don't forget to exercise: every hour-long television programme contains approximately 6 commercial breaks that last 3 minutes each, so you can get a total body workout without missing a scene. Moreover, research has shown that you tend to snack more while watching TV. Exercising during breaks can help you cut down on snacking. This workout is great for beginners, but it's also good for exercisers of every level, since extra bouts of activity throughout the day help to keep your metabolism revved, says *Prevention* fitness advisor Wayne L Westcott, PhD, of Quincy, MA.

Do 10 to 15 repetitions of each exercise, followed by the aerobic component, until the show starts.

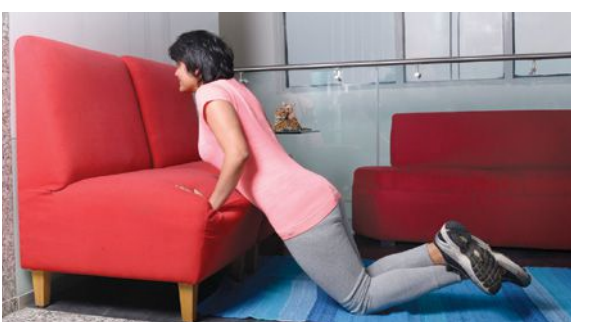
BONUS
Exercising during breaks cuts down on snacking.



> Break 1

Couch Pushups (chest, back of arms)

Facing a couch, kneel on the floor about 2 feet away from it. Cross your ankles and place your hands shoulder-width apart on a cushion edge. Slowly bend your arms, and lower your upper body until your chest touches the couch. Hold, then press up again. Keep your shoulders, hips and knees in line.
***Finish** by doing jumping jacks.*



> Break 2

Side Crunches (obliques)

Lie on a couch on your right side with your legs together and your knees bent. Place your left hand behind your head with your elbow pointing toward the ceiling. Wrap your left arm across your waist. Contracting the oblique muscles along your left side, lift your shoulder off the couch, bringing your rib cage toward your hip. Hold, then slowly lower. Repeat, then switch sides. (If your couch is too soft, you may need to do this exercise on the floor.)
***Finish** with crossover punches. While standing, twist from your waist and alternate punching your fists diagonally across your body.*

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> Break 3

Armchair Stands (front of thighs, butt)

Sit on the edge of a couch with your feet shoulder-width apart. Without using your arms, press into the floor with your feet and stand, tightening your bottom muscles as you rise. Hold, then slowly lower yourself. Before you touch the chair, stand up again.

***Finish** by walking up and down the stairs.*

> Break 4

Armchair Dips (back of arms)

Sitting on the edge of a chair (or couch), place your hands on the edge. Move your feet out so that your bottom is off the chair and your knees are bent at 90-degree angles. Bending your elbows so they point behind you, lower yourself as far as comfortable. Hold, then slowly press up again.

***Finish** by circling your fists in the air to imitate boxing a punching bag.*





> Break 5

Leg-up Couch Crunches (abdominals)

Lie on your back on a couch with your knees bent, your feet up on one end, and your hands behind your head. Pressing your lower back into the couch, slowly lift your head, shoulders, and upper back off the couch. Hold, then slowly lower. (If your couch is too soft, you may need to do this exercise on the floor.)

***Finish** by doing knee lifts. While standing, alternate bringing your right elbow down to meet your left knee, and vice versa.*

> Break 6

Scissors (inner and outer thighs)

Lie on your back on a couch with your hands (under your butt and your legs straight up in the air. Keeping your knees slightly bent, slowly spread your legs as far apart as comfortable. Hold, then slowly bring your legs together, resisting as you press them in.

***Finish** by doing side slides, stepping one foot out sideways, then sliding the other foot to meet it.*



ALL MOVES: SHEKHER GHOSH/WWW.INDIATODAYIMAGES.COM; APPAREL: NIKE; SHOE: MODEL'S OWN; RUG: FABINDIA

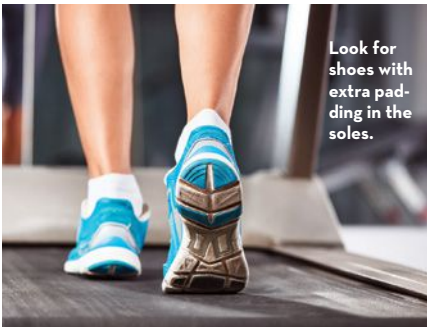


9 TREADMILL MISTAKES *YOU'RE MAKING*

Avoid these walking and jogging missteps that slow your results.

BY LINDA MELONE, CSCS AND SWETA PAL

As the mercury starts rising, you might want to take your workout indoors. Some love it and some hate it, but treadmill continues to be the gym staple, helping to get your heart pumping. But before you get up on it, watch out for these common blunders that may sabotage your fitness goals, worse, lead to injuries.

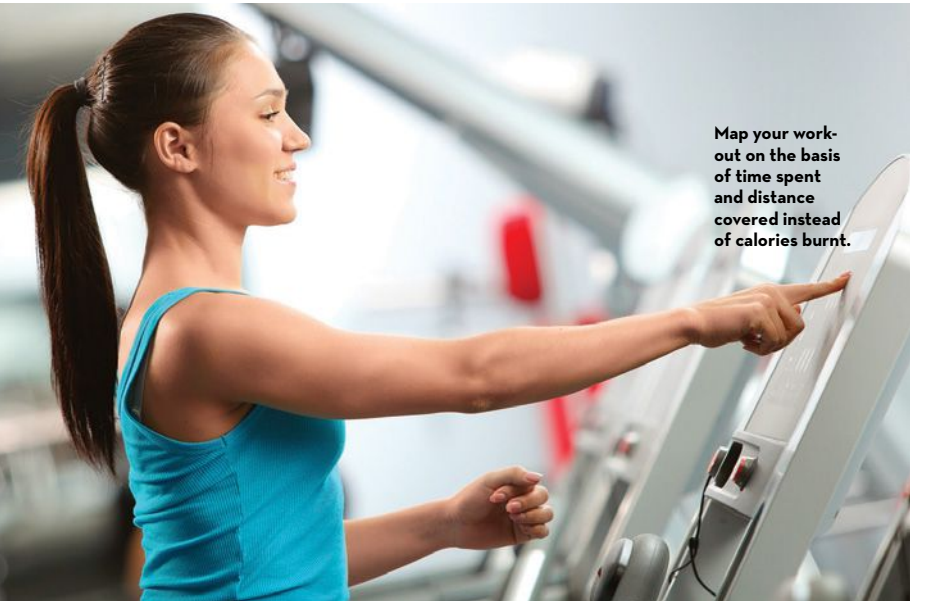

Look for shoes with extra padding in the soles.

1 You wear the wrong shoes.
This is not a good time to be vain—so when selecting your sneakers, go for function before style, says Deepak Rawat, national fitness manager, Fitness First India. He suggests getting a professional gait analysis done to know what features you need in your shoe. *Prevention* advisor and Reebok master trainer Vinata Shetty suggests choosing a shoe that offers good arch support and cushioning. Look for shoes with extra padding in the soles to protect your heels and foot bones from the high impact of each foot strike. However, use this pair only for walking or running—not dance or cardio classes.

2 You look at your feet.
Looking at your feet while walking on the treadmill can cause you to lose your balance, says Shetty. "You might even strain the back of your neck and misalign the rest of your body." Gaze straight ahead and keep your shoulders level and chest open. Your hips, knees and lower-back will follow, making a relatively straight line from the head to your feet.

3 You land on your heels.
Studies have shown that runners who first strike the ground with their forefeet experience fewer knee injuries than their heel-striking counterparts. The study published in *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise,* found that up to 56% of runners experience overuse injuries like shin splints and knee aches each year, and the way you run may be partly to blame. Watch how your foot lands on the belt as landing on the heels will use mainly the knee joint as a shock absorber putting a lot of stress on it. "Try and consciously aim for a mid-foot strike instead as that will distribute the force of the impact across the length of the foot," says Shetty. However, changing your stride can take anywhere from

Runners who first strike the ground with their forefeet experience fewer knee injuries than their heel-striking counterparts.



Map your workout on the basis of time spent and distance covered instead of calories burnt.

8 weeks to 6 months and you need to be more cautious while running as your focus is divided between running and landing on mid-foot.

4 You stick with one routine.

It may be comfortable doing the same treadmill workout day after day, but over time you'll burn fewer calories as your body adapts and muscles become more efficient. "Introduce interval running to your regimen," says Mumbai-based fitness trainer Huzefa Lokhandwala. Do an easy jog for 5 minutes and put 1 minute of fast sprints between the jogs. As you get stronger, you can increase your speed. Lokhandwala also suggests changing your routine every 4 weeks. "Using the elliptical or the stationary bike will give you the same benefits as the treadmill and will also prevent overuse of the muscles on your shin and knees," he says.

5 Your arms are all over the place.

Swinging your arms or criss-crossing them in front of you as you walk is simply not efficient, says John Higgins, MD, associate professor of medicine at the University of Texas Health Science Centre at Houston and director of exercise physiology at the Memorial Hermann Texas Medical Centre. "You burn up energy with your arms and won't be able to work out as long." Keep your arms by your sides until you get to higher speed, says Higgins. Once you reach a jog, keep arms bent parallel to each other and at 90-degrees, which helps with the rotation of your torso.

6 You measure your workout by calories burnt.

If you map your run by the number calories the machine says you have burnt, chances are you are off by a

ALL IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

few hundred calories. “Even though the treadmill will show how many calories you have burnt, it is only an estimate. Moreover, the treadmill doesn't know your age, gender or body composition, so it is a better idea to map your workout on the basis of time spent and distance covered,” says Lokhanwala. If you complete one kilometre in 10 minutes, aim to complete it in 8 minutes in a few weeks' time, and so on.

7 You hold the bars.

It is okay for beginners to hold the bars, but not for long. Holding the bars while running creates an unnatural posture for your body as it restricts proper movement of the spine and can cause injuries, says Rawat. Again, when walking on an incline, don't hold the bars. “You wouldn't have bars to hold if you were walking up a hill, right? So why look for that support here?” says Rawat. If the possibility of injuring your back doesn't stop this habit, consider this—you burn fewer calories when you support part of your own body weight. Walk naturally, nearly vertical with a very slight forward lean.

Holding the bars of the treadmill while running restricts movement of the spine and may cause injuries.



8 You hunch forward.

If you lean too much in any direction, your body will naturally work to keep its balance, says Benjamin Figueroa, senior exercise physiologist at Fox Rehabilitation in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Hunching forward can cause you to develop an anterior tilt, cause you to lose your balance or contribute to lower back pain. Keep a solid upright posture, which includes engaging your core muscles. If you can't maintain good posture, slow down the treadmill speed, says Figueroa.

9 You overdo it.

Excess muscle soreness, knee and shin pain, elevated resting heart rate, and a stiff back are signs you're overtraining. It is a sign that you need to change your current workout and re-evaluate your exercise regimen. Try switching machines, or space out high intensity workouts to 2 to 3 times a week with rest days in between, says Shetty. Moderate workouts of between 3 and 5 times a week should work for most people.



"I rediscovered my fun side."

Noida resident Dolly Singh shares her journey from a size XXL to L and the roadblocks on the way.

DOLLY SINGH | **45 yrs**
Noida
Earlier Weight: **84 kg**
Present Weight: **71 kg**
Biggest Difference: **Boost in energy, self-confidence and a positive outlook.**

I had started seeing signs of my weight gain for quite some time. But I never really bothered to do anything about it. But then I started noticing the huge bulge around my tummy when I wore form fitted clothes. Even then, trying to lose the flab was not the first thought I had. You may be surprised to learn that I own several retail stores of a top sports brand in Delhi-NCR. And yet, I chose the easier way out—of buying baggy clothes to hide the bulges. But it started playing on my mind. I didn't look or feel good. I avoided going out with my friends as seeing myself in ill-fitted clothes dampened my spirit. I became a dull, boring person who felt meh most of the time. The final blow was not being

able to fit into any apparel from my stores. That was it. I decided to take charge of my health and fitness.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

I joined a gym close to my home in June, 2013 and got a personal trainer there too. The first few weeks were the toughest. It was a pain—literally—to drag myself to the gym every day as my body was quite used to the sedentary, lethargic life it had been leading until then. Every muscle in my body screamed. But I told myself that I had to overcome the challenge in my mind to get a better body, and the pain would go away soon.

MY FITNESS PLAN

Dolly works out for 90 minutes and goes for a 40-minute brisk walk five days a week.

MONDAY	45 minutes cardio with strength training
TUESDAY	45 minutes cardio with core strengthening
WEDNESDAY	45 minutes cardio with biceps and triceps weight training
THURSDAY	45 minutes cardio with legs and obliques exercises
FRIDAY	45 minutes cardio with shoulders and abs exercises

PHOTOGRAPH BY: KESHAV KAPIL; LOCATION COURTESY: HEALTH VILLAGE, NOIDA

I hit the gym for 90 minutes every day and went for a brisk walk in the evening for another hour or so. I worked out every part of my body and controlled my carb intake and reduced my portions. I steered myself away from sweet treats and savoury snacks and swapped them with fresh fruits and roasted nuts instead. Changing food habits was as challenging as getting off the couch. But luckily, results started to show in 2 months. After that it wasn't all that difficult as I got the much-needed motivation to keep at it.

A BIG LEAP

I lost 14 kilos in one year and the transformation was visible. I dropped from a size XXL to L and I was delirious with joy. The compliments started pouring in as well. But my biggest gain has been the change in my overall health—I feel super energetic all the time. The old me who had to struggle with herself to get off the couch and into gym clothes has been replaced by a fun, active person who loves working out.

I have regained my love for shopping and love dressing up, going out and socialising. I still continue with my fitness routine 5 days a week and watch what I eat, but nothing's a no as long as I eat in moderation. And it is not over yet—my goal is to lose 6 kilos more and reach a size M by end of 2015.

—As told to Sweta Pal

Bringing up Parents

Childhood is all about watching the rainbows and flying kites. Here's how to enjoy the ride with your child.

BY SUNALINI MATHEW



Our idea of parenthood evolves over time. It begins from the age we play 'Family-Family' as young children, mimicking our parents' ways; it changes into 'anti-parent matter' in our teens and settles into an rosy view at a time we ourselves are on the brink of parenthood. All these ideas are distilled into our experience as parents. "Being a mum or dad has more to do with you, rather than your child, because it's you who is going to create an environment for your child, and environment is all-important," says Dr Shraddha Kapoor, associate professor, department of human development and child studies, Lady Irwin College, New Delhi. "You need to be the person you hope your child will become, because kids learn more by watching than by instruction."

No matter how we approach parenting, at the most basic level most of us aim at keeping our kids safe and healthy—physically, mentally and emotionally. But sometimes, our roles may not be as balanced as we think they are. "Our own anxieties and insecurities take over—from there comes control," says Dr Amit Sen, psychiatrist, Children First, New Delhi. Introspect, to understand if your decisions are based on your child's well-being, or some of them stem from your angst or needs.

Your cues to gauging whether you're off-track are simple—look to your child for the answers. She may tell you what she thinks outright. If this happens once too often, then re-evaluate your parenting persona. There may be extreme forms of rebellion, massive mood swings and a great deal of talking back. A too-compliant child, or one who withdraws (is timid and anxious) are signs that you need to understand your own anxiety. Here, experts help you evaluate whether you're swinging to the extremes and how to bring balance back into your equation.



HYPER PARENTING

You're a tiger mom if... You are driven to getting the best for your child in terms of what society believes is the best. You work with your child, sparing no effort or cost. You're thinking or saying to him: "Please don't let me down." You see your child as an extension of yourself. The comparison factor will be very high.

"Consider why you are putting so much pressure on your child and yourself," says Sen. "Are you getting swayed by the system—like the case of a class 6 child who is being put into an IIT coaching class

because the institution is thought to be the hallmark of success?" Sen calls it tunnelling success—giving your child a narrow idea of what it means to be successful. You just may be missing out on enjoying the ride. "You are pushing yourself and your child towards burnout," says Aarti C Rajaratnam, a clinical psychologist, author of the book *Parenting: Innocence to Inner Sense* and director of Peepal Prodigy School, Coimbatore. "It could result in your child always feeling pressured to win and even end up in him becoming obsessed about it, not being able to deal with failure."

Instead: With the energy and drive you have, you could give your child the opportunity to sample different things, so he understands his own interests and strengths and you recognise them too. "Accept your child's wiring," says Sen. The only way of knowing how she is wired is by listening and asking questions.



You are a fighter-plane dad if...

Tradition rules, with the father being the head of the house. Your line of thought is: "I earn the money and I should be respected for it." You have unfulfilled dreams that you give your children an example of ("I didn't have these opportunities that you do") and demand they act or behave a certain way.

Think about it: Your aim is probably to give your children the best so that they are happy. "But if you tell someone: 'I want you to be happy,' in almost a threatening way, it won't work," says Sen. Corporal punishment is against the law, but sarcastic comments can often do just as much damage, says Kapoor. "It's criticism that hurts a child's self-esteem and amounts to verbal and emotional abuse." Your child may end up becoming a people-pleaser, and in the case of a boy, chauvinistic or aggressive in future relationships. "He may resort to problem-solving through anger," says Rajaratnam. "For a daughter, it may become a problem later in life, where she will feel the need to constantly please the man she is with," says Lina Ashar, founder of Kangaroo Kids and author of *Who Do You Think You're Kidding?*.

Instead: Engage with the family: every evening should be one without an agenda. "Research says that for a boy, a male role model is critical between 10 and 16 years. Do things together that are not stereotypically



The Dragon Parent

A mom or dad who has a child with special needs, who she feels over-protective of.
Gopika Kapoor, who has a special child, is the author of *Spiritual Parenting*, and works as an autism intervention therapist. She feels it's natural for parents to shield a child from awkward situations, like when someone in the playground says, "Don't play with that boy, he's mad." The way around it is to call the child aside and help him understand autism," she says. "It's tough love—you realise that your child has to live in the world even after you're gone. But instead of creating a dragon-like atmosphere around yourself and your kid, where you're alienating people, surround yourself with people who will support you and accept your child.

male—go grocery shopping, cook a snack. "If you're spending time with your child, let him decide, for a change. Do talk to a counsellor if you feel you need help.

You are a helicopter mom if... You need to monitor everything your child is doing even though he is now of school-going age. You may not be able to let anyone else be a caregiver even for a brief period—perhaps not even the father. You decide who your child's friends will be. You fear the worst.

Think about it: "Everything for your child is predictable, which reduces her ability to look for solutions in a world that will be unpredictable at whatever stage she leaves you," says Kapoor. It may also cramp her freedom of thought. "A child may become excessively withdrawn in the first phase of life, and then may even be prone to risky behaviours once he leaves home, to go to college, for instance," says Sen. Your child may become a chronic liar because she may want some distance from you.

Instead: Challenge yourself to let go. Send your child on that school excursion; let him go for a few days to his grandparents' house where you don't set the agenda. Leave your child with his father for a few hours, and don't leave instructions. "Allow your child to make mistakes, because that is the way he will learn," says Sen. Equip him with the knowledge that he needs, about sexual abuse, for instance, and then trust his judgement. Discover, or rediscover, yourself, your interests, so that you don't see yourself as an extension of your child.

LAISSEZ FAIRE PARENTING

You are a free-range parent if...

You feel your child should explore the world on her own terms and that the earlier she is independent, the better for her. You may also be over-indulgent and show great affection.

Think about it: "Discipline is a form of caring and nurturing," says Sen. While children need space, they also need for boundaries to be set, for structure in their life and for direction. Too much freedom can be disturbing to the child, and the child may end up thinking: 'nobody cares'.

Instead: "Take charge," says Ashar. "Set limits and enforce consequences." So, while you may be alright with your child being on social media, you do need to explain what safeguards to maintain so that he knows that there are consequences to being online. "You are the parent and while you may ask for your children's opinion, you take the final decisions," says Ashar.



You are a remote parent if...

You spend most of the day away from your child, not necessarily at work, but even in another room, for instance. You may shout out or give instructions over the phone, and may be emotionally distant.

Think about it: There may be no conversation or real interaction, only communication about daily activities, so you may not really know who your child is. It may come as a surprise to you when the teacher tells you something about her.

Instead: It's the quality of time spent with a child that's most important. Perhaps you have just a couple of hours a day. During that time, disengage from everything else and immerse yourself in the time you spend together. "It's a good idea to make a check-list of things to do with your child: read a book together, go out for a meal that's not a mall meal, visit an art gallery or museum," says Kapoor. These activities help you understand your child better and help you bond. Rajaratnam lists the 7 components of quality time: love and acceptance, attention, belonging and security, companionship and friendship, communication, creativity and expression, opportunity and achievement. Have you catered to all of the above in the last month?

ALL IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE; PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY KESHAV KAPIL


“The most wasted of all days is one without laughter”
—Nicholas Chamfort
SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Vidya's Balance

Or, how to embrace yourself fearlessly

BY SANGHAMITRA CHAKRABORTY | PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROHAN SHRESTHA

Vidya Balan, 36, is one of the most talented actors to come out of Bollywood in recent years. She's got a masters in sociology from St Xavier's College, Mumbai, is cerebral not just about the way she approaches her work, but in her understanding of the way women are gazed at, our bodies and how it affects our self-esteem.

As I meet her at one of her favourite cafes in Pali Hill on a warm Mumbai day, she looks lovely in an indigo kurta, her face glowing without any make-up. I notice how slim she is, but don't mention it, as I know it's a touchy topic. The first promos of *Hamari Adhuri Kahani* with Emraan Hashmi that will be released soon, are out and everyone can see there's a big change.

I proceed to chat with her, and through it I find the hidden layers—the angst, the pain, and then the coming to terms with her issues. But the Vidya we meet now is one that has journeyed well and has embraced herself truly. Despite the anger of feeling used on account of mistreatment, exposing herself and her body to unnecessary, harmful medication. But she's moved on now and how. Hear her:

My family's unconditional love for me, helped me be very comfortable with myself.



It's been quite a journey—what life lessons have you learnt along the way?

The most important thing that I have learnt to value as an actor is me, myself. While there is pressure on all of us to be a certain way as actors, as female actors there's that much more pressure to toe the line, to follow the stereotype. When I came in with *Parineeta*, a lot of people asked if I was sure I wanted to come in playing a woman, because this is an industry where youth is the most desirable quality. So I should make a debut as a yuppie in a romantic, stereotypical film. But I was getting to be an actor—and that was a great opportunity—and I made my debut at 26, I was already past being the yuppie. Even when I was a teenager I was a woman; I've never fancied doing those teenager roles. So right from that to the future choices that I ended up making, to body image issues, there was enough pressure, directly or indirectly to be someone I was not. I have tried to be someone else, failed, reclaimed myself. You can deal with pain, with the lack of privacy and all of that, as long as you can be true to yourself. As long as you're comfortable and accepting of yourself.

You think it's come ahead of your time, because you are in a tough environment?

After that realisation, I ended up doing work that brought out the best in me, that meant commercial success and critical acclaim. *Pa, Ishqiya, No One Killed Jessica, Dirty Picture, Kahaani*, everything happened then. I am very grateful that it happened then.

Everyone without exception calls you a lovely person; that's very precious. What makes you the person you are, spreading happiness so easily?

I think it's my family, my upbringing. I really have not chosen to be the way I am, I just am. I've always been unconditionally loved by my family. That's why I ended up being very comfortable with myself. Not to say that I've never had times of self-doubt. As I said, I did try to fit in at some point. All that is part and parcel of growing up. But I think when you have that kind of love and support from your family, when you feel loved, you want to spread that love.

I have tried to be someone else, failed, and reclaimed myself.

Women's bodies are such a minefield and when you add self-esteem to the mix it gets even more complicated. Your take?

Historically I think our identities have been derived as being someone's property, therefore we've defined ourselves in terms of various bodily measures: size, height, colour, hair—we're almost like a sum total of these things. But now women are beyond being someone's property and bearing his children—it's still not a norm, but it's moving in that direc-

tion—women are seeing themselves outside of their bodies, and saying what the hell, we're not just bodies. We may be daughters and sisters, and wives, mothers—but we are individuals and professionals. I find it extremely frustrating to be reduced to a body.

Being a fat girl in my growing up years when people would tell me, "you've got such a pretty face, why don't you lose weight?" Even when I was not in films, I would be like, "Who gives you the licence to say this?" It reaches a stage when girls in the same situation look at themselves only as fat people. That becomes your primary identity.

If someone finds you attractive or talented you find it difficult to believe it. I have gone through fads, in college mainly. Not that much in school because I went to a convent and my interaction with boys was limited. In college when you meet boys and you find someone attractive you want them to look at you and find you attractive. And that's when you feel small in your bigness, and you feel like you need to do something about this.



> "I find it extremely frustrating to be reduced to a body.

Did you ever do anything drastic?

I went through this crazy water therapy: someone told me you drink as much water as possible and I ended up drinking 10 litres of water a day until I felt sick and washed out, literally. And my family was extremely irritated and angry because I used to wake up puking in the middle of the night, I looked like a scarecrow, so when I gave it up I put on weight that much more easily. Therefore, there's always been this battle with the body.

I remember when I was in contention for *Parineeta*, I was told I had to lose this much weight. All that I'm

fine with, if the director has a certain vision of how the character should be, the actor needs to change themselves accordingly. But how thin is thin enough, and what body is really fat? Who is to decide that? And not because I've been defensive throughout my life. Actually, I look at the face, not the body. You look at the eye of the person when you are talking.

Over time, when I became an actor it became such an issue; at some point it was national news. And I became the subject of speculation: once I had an actor's wife call and tell me, "Listen are you in a happy space? It's not okay, why have you put on so much weight?" So people will tell you "OMG, you've lost so much weight" or "OMG you've put on weight," is there another conversation you can have with me, for God's sake? I find it excruciating that at dinners entire conversations happen around food when you are eating. I don't like to eat in front of anyone; even on a shoot I sit in my van. Because people have even told me, "Oh God you eat so little, how do you put on weight?" I am like, you know, give yourself a break. Poor you, you obviously have little else to do because you look at me and wonder how much food I'm eating. It used to bother me and anger me. It's not an excuse, but we women also go through hormonal changes, which affect our bodies. They affect some people more than others. And on a sensitive day, maybe if you're PMSing, and you've gone to an event and someone says something to you, you're like, you know what, I don't want to step out. I don't want to meet people.

How thin is thin enough, and what body is really fat? Who is to decide that?

So, way before *Dirty Picture* I had lost weight—which was 4 kg but publications had thought I had lost 10 kgs— *Pa, Ishqiya, No one Killed Jessica* and even *Kahaani* happened. Then at the time of *Dirty Picture,* Milan (Luthria, the director) asked me to put on weight and this was my biggest challenge. And I am so glad I did it, because even today people tell me "Because of you, I love my love handles, I'm comfortable with them, I still feel sexy." And that is a payoff that I'd never imagined. I just did what felt true for the role but it was liberating for me, because there I was sitting with my stomach hanging out and I was enjoying the scene. The real reward was what people were telling me after the film, and that sealed my fight (or so I thought then!) with body image issues.

I had to keep the weight for *Ghanchakkar*, and also because in all honesty I couldn't have lost it all so quickly. Director Raj Kumar (Gupta) thought it worked for the character, so I thought I won't kill myself; because every time I lost weight, it's been a lot of work.

At least in the last 10 years I have not resorted to any crash diets, fat burners, medication, none of these powders, no going under the knife. So I found it tough, then *Shaadi Ke Side Effects* happened (and by then I was married) and suddenly I faced criticism for it. And I'm talking about one thing that I read randomly, which said, "Maybe she's lost interest in her career post marriage" and that is what bothered me. Again using my body to target something that's sacred to me, which is my work. There was a lot of anger at that. Also, I had been put on medication for three and a half years for a medical condition that I did not have!



Was it a wrong diagnosis?

I don't know and I hope not. Even if it was, no one would admit to it now. This was just before *Pa*; I was working out and the weight wasn't coming down and all I needed to lose was 4 kilos. So I went to this dietician, who asked me to consult a hormone specialist who told me I had a medical condition that will need lifelong medication. I kick myself today because I did not get a second opinion. I started on the medication and lost the weight but I guess since there was no real problem, it started affecting my health in strange ways. Maybe it was a genuine mistake or maybe they were trying to accelerate my weight loss so that the results would show easily. Even if that were the case, it would be okay if it had been an informed choice on my part, but I wasn't asked or even told. Had I known, I would never have agreed to take medication to lose weight. I beat myself down for the longest time for not asking enough questions.

The unnecessary medication led to a lot of complications, I was falling ill very often, my energy levels were extremely low. Finally, I took another opinion and was told you're absolutely fine, you didn't need this. I went off the medication and became double my size



> You need to figure out what works for you, even if it takes longer

and this was right after *Dirty Picture* and like I told you, the director of *Ghanchakkar* was fine with what I was. But what bothered me was that there wasn't lack of effort on my part to counter this sudden weight gain, yet the results were just not commensurate with my efforts. I'm not a big eater, I love working out, so I couldn't understand what was happening with my body. The weight gain was only one of the side effects and I ended up going to a whole lot of doctors to see if there was anything wrong with me, and everyone told me I was in good health. Only because I'd been on medication (which my body did not need) for 3.5 years, my metabolism had crashed. I had been on 1500 mg metformin a day. I had been told I have PCOD and needed to be on medication for life. But as it turned out, I did not have PCOD.

For a long time, I was so angry about this that it led to a trust issue. I love people, I don't want to pull anyone down but having said that, I'm not sure I can rely on a single medical opinion ever again.

I make it clear to whoever I'm consulting with that I'm not looking for quick-fix solutions and don't believe in short cuts. I'm waiting to give it time so I remain healthy in the long run.

When did all this happen?

This happened in 2012, and I went off the medication and then of course my body went berserk, because I didn't have a weaning period. And I was afraid to talk about it when it was all happening, because I was

wary of trusting anyone even to report this correctly. I did not owe anyone an explanation. There was so much anger and angst in me, but I didn't want to make it public. Why did I talk about it today now that I've overcome it: I feel if by reading this even one person can feel some sort of solace when they're going through this, it will be worth it. But today I've also forgiven myself for the fact that I trusted this person and I'd not taken a second opinion.

I kept beating myself up over this because my parents wanted me to get another opinion before going for any sort of medication. But today, I have come out, I won't say unscathed, but wiser and lighter.

And thankfully there has been no real damage. I've made a lot of lifestyle changes. Eating on time, sleeping on time, sleeping enough. And I just feel better for it. I've come a long way.

I enjoy working out, I feel those endorphins kicking in.

You're better so that's what matters. And PETA has named you amongst the hottest vegetarians. Plant-based diets are the 'it' thing in the world of health, are you committed to it?

I was born a vegetarian; I did not know any other kind of food. I don't even have eggs because I hate the taste of eggs. I eat a largely plant-based diet, but I do eat dairy products, I'm not on a gluten-free diet, but I avoid wheat, it just makes me feel that much better. Though I've had wheat all my life. I just feel better with rice now. When I was in college I gave up rice completely, because everyone said you put on weight with rice. But I'm from a rice-eating community and that's what people tend to discount. You can't have cookie-cutter solutions. Like we have coconut in our food and our food is cooked in coconut oil, and there was a time when everyone said you shouldn't, because my father is a heart patient. We had gone off it but it's so confusing. Many studies are saying the exact opposite. You can't give up everything because of things you've heard. You need to figure out what works for you, even though it might take longer. I would rather take longer and live a healthy and happy life. So I don't go to a dietician. I just do yoga. And I sleep on time. But I'm not obsessed with inevitable exceptions, because I believe obsession works at cross-purposes. An actor recently told me "Listen you can't have just oats, you have to have this particular type of organic oats that you get abroad." I'm not going to think about every morsel that goes into my mouth. You can't live life in fear. If there is no fear, you live happily, healthily. Like for a while I was scared. Every day I used to wake up wondering if there is a bigger problem. If you feel like bingeing one day, binge. If you feel like bingeing every day, you need to figure it out.

So I hear common sense, and I hear balance...

I am a Balan, so there's balance. God, that's so corny! Look, I enjoy working out, I feel those endorphins kicking in. But most people don't believe that, because if my body is fluctuating so much, I must be someone who dumps my workouts. I do work out 4 to 6 times a week. Sleep was a major lifestyle change I needed for my metabolism. I used to sleep at 4 am and barely get 3 hours before a morning shoot. Otherwise I would wake up later and lose half the day. But now I sleep by 11 or latest 12, and then wake up by 8 or if I'm being lazy by 9. I have 3 litres of water a day, and I'm not saying I eat every two hours, but I eat whenever I'm hungry. I think your body tells you. But it ends up being about 4 or 5 meals a day. I've stopped having coffee, only for my sleep. I used to love coffee, but now I've switched to tea. And I don't deprive myself of anything. I don't have a sweet tooth so I'm fine. But when I went off the medication, it made me crave sweets.

You can't live in fear. If there is no fear, you live happily, healthily.

You are a beautiful person—how do you look at beauty? It's another complex issue in today's commercially driven world.

During *Parineeta* Vinod Chopra asked me to get my nose corrected. I've got my grandfather's nose, my mother says. And I said if that means I can't do the film, then I won't, but I won't tamper with my body. My approach to all of this is very conservative, a little traditional, even middle class, where I don't trust quick-fix solutions. I don't trust going under the knife. Over time I've known people—not just from the industry—who don't need to adhere to a particular type of face or body or structure, who are going nuts over this.

I met a 16-year-old girl who said she was going for a jaw enhancement. I asked her what profession she aspired to be in, she was going to be a doctor. Why would she want to tamper with her face? She said, because "I don't have the perfect jaw" and her parents were ready to pay for it. Crazy, isn't it?

When I was in college it was hair colour, then we used to get braces to fix gaps or protruding teeth, but today it's all-pervasive. I had a friend who went to get her laugh lines removed, they told her it's a 6-month thing. She wasn't from Bombay, so she would come every two months to get it done and the laugh lines became worse.

I find anyone who's got a very distinctive look, beautiful. Individuality is not really appreciated widely, but I find that extremely sexy in both men and women.

There are so many people who define themselves by externally imposed boundaries and let their sense of self be affected. Especially as women, it affects you that much more. Judgement is so tied in with being loved.



> “I find anyone who's got a distinctive look, beautiful.

As women we let it get to us easily. Men have stronger defences?

Not just defences, a man’s worth is not measured in terms of his desirability but in terms of how successful he is, what he’s doing in his life, how he’s fending for his family. How many times have you heard this, “He’s okay looking, but the wife is really gorgeous, but when it’s the reverse, people always say ‘How long are they going to be together? Or why are they together?’

I’ve heard men say this, and some of my friends say this to trouble me, “Oh that woman has let herself go, obviously the man is going to cheat on her”. I get irritated even though I know it’s a joke. Like someone was telling me about this girl who has dark skin and so has her mother, but she does not like her daughter because she’s dark. Her son is also dark, but her son is her son and that’s okay, but she worries about who'll marry her daughter. In this day and age, in Bombay, educated, going to the best schools and colleges—it’s crazy.

I wish I could start a movement called Embrace Yourself, not just for women and girls, do talks in schools and colleges. Love yourself as you are, if you don’t, no one else will; it’s the truth. If you’re overweight and you feel someone doesn’t like you, it’s because you feel you’re not worthy. I have been in that space where someone has said, OMG how sexy are you, and I’m like; "Yeah, right." Because it was almost unbelievable at one point.

As we step out into the world and make more of our lives and give it meaning beyond our bodies, we should embrace ourselves. Literally,

don't wait for someone else to do it, you have two arms, right?

There's a huge premium on being with someone rather than being single. Tell us how you've made this journey.

Since we're talking about embracing yourself, unless you do, you won't find that other person to embrace you. I'd been single for long and and my parents were beginning to ask if they should set me up with someone, because I don't really socialise, and they had let me be because they knew I would be happier with someone who understood the demands of my profession. At one stage I'd dated people (who I didn't want to date), but because I wanted to be with someone. And I reached a stage where I said it's okay if I die alone, rather than being with someone for the sake of it. You won't believe it, it was soon after that I met Siddharth (Roy Kapur).

Friends of mine either had long-time boyfriends, or were married or engaged, or had children even. They thought I was leading this glamorous life and I could have been with anyone I wanted to be with, but I wasn't really with anyone. And finally it happened when I said, I'm happy being with myself. As a matter of fact, I've never seen myself married, that's the interesting thing. I always wanted to be with someone, but not necessarily married. Then he proposed to me. You know amongst South Indians there's no 'proposal', and when I was seeing him, I knew we were headed there and we'd begun to talk. When it happened it was a complete surprise and I realised my family knew about it, that my sister had given him my ring for the size. But even without that I would have been with Siddharth. With Siddharth I could just be myself. That was the most attractive thing about him. And I could laugh raucously with him. I wasn't holding back in any way.

My mother says marriage has made me younger. She feels that I began to progress, not regress, to being a girl.

Do you see yourself differently now, through his prism?

Love in a romantic relationship is most challenging because the people who love you unconditionally, are people you are born to or grow up with, so it's a given. But here, it's beautiful when you learn and grow together, love, fight, share, laugh, all of that is happening together. So it's you—but better. And it can't happen that only one person is getting better. It either works both ways or it does not work for either. Thankfully something happened here and we're together. I don't want to speak on his behalf, but my mother says marriage has made me younger. Like I said, I was always a woman, but she feels I began to progress to being a girl, not regress, after meeting Siddharth. So I think it's worked well and touchwood I hope it always does!

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Out Of The Woods



"In early 2014, while I was being appreciated for my work, one morning, I woke up feeling different...it was all downhill from there..." Actor Deepika Padukone's disclosure of suffering from depression has shaken the silence surrounding this condition. We tell you why women should sit up and listen.

BY PRIYAMVADA KOWSHIK

It happened on a routine visit to her homeopath. Aruna Rao* 37, (name changed) was in a consultation, seeking help for persistent fatigue. She sat there, feeling helpless, strangely unable to explain her problem—how does one admit to not being able to get out of bed every morning? Perhaps she was being difficult, she thought, beginning to second guess herself. But something had been amiss. She had stopped looking forward to anything, being at work, being with with her 7-year-old son... "Is there a medicine to make me feel better?" she asked.

At this point, her eyes welled up and the knot in her throat snapped. Why was her tiredness making her cry? Aruna wondered. As she wept uncontrollably, she heard her doc say, "I think you should see a therapist."

Recalling her depressive episode 2 years ago, Aruna remembers how embarrassed she had been, refusing to admit she could be depressed. After all, she was the archetypal "strong woman"—managing a home and a full-time job, raising a child and caring for her parents. Aruna had a full life with friends, yoga, travel, books. The one area she was struggling to hold together was her troubled marriage, but wasn't that true of so many urban couples? she'd reasoned. Why then was she feeling like her song had been silenced? "Then it began affecting my memory, and that was the last straw. I was forgetting about appointments



"Depression can be disabling, so it is important to recognise the symptoms and seek help early."

and phone conversations I had, and it put me in awkward situations because I'm very organised at work. So I popped vitamins and supplements, not knowing how to cope with this person I was becoming," she says. Her therapist referred her to a psychiatrist who prescribed anti-depressants. After few weeks of medication, Aruna decided to take charge and find her way back. She revived her yoga practice, took regular therapy sessions and spoke to friends when the familiar low moods resurfaced.

ALL IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

Hers' is no unique story, it is a narrative being rewritten each day in the lives of thousands of women navigating the choppy waters of mid-life, struggling to strike a work-life balance, dealing with relationship troubles, postpartum issues, and later, their changing relationship with their children as they transition to adolescence. The problem is compounded by our unique physiology that adds its own complications in the minefield that is a woman's life. When we hit a storm, some of us may recognise we're sinking, and call out for help. But many others may begin to believe that life is merely about managing to keep our heads above the water. Then there are those like Aruna who are working their way back and worry about being dragged away again. Will it reappear, striking when she's down? But she's wiser now, more aware and mindful, but still hesitant to reveal the full extent of her condition to her family.



"I do not have the courage Deepika Padukone has shown," she says, referring to the outspoken young actor who recently made public her encounter with depression. Her frank disclosure has helped break the halo of silence around this common condition, forcing many to introspect, and to some extent, speak out about that-which-cannot-be-named—a psychiatric condition.

What is Depression?

"Depression is not one thing, it is many things," explains Dr Alok Sarin, psychiatrist and mental health activist who consults at Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Medicine, New Delhi. It is a combination of psychological and physiological factors, and can express in varying degrees of severity. On the one end of this wide spectrum are the 'worried well'—people dealing with difficult and unhappy situations, financial troubles, work stress—who may "feel depressed" about life situations, but are not clinically depressed. Medically, some of these cases may be classified as sub-syndromal depression—found to be the most common mental health problem in a study of urban mental health issues from 2004-2009, spanning Delhi, Lucknow

and Chennai, conducted by the Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences, (IHBAS) New Delhi. “Sub-syndromal depression may not be a serious concern, but nevertheless affects the quality of life,” says Dr Nimesh Desai, director, IHBAS.

On the other end of the spectrum is depression in a psychiatric domain. Called syndromal or clinical depression, it is characterised by biochemical changes in the brain. “This biochemical change can alter the patient’s perception of stress, her perception of the situation itself,” explains Sarin. She’s unable to make sense of why she’s feeling this way, “it’s like entering foreign territory.”



Does it mean I’m weak?

Here are answers to some questions that don’t leave you.

A life-event you managed to face with resilience earlier, may knock you off another time. Does that make you weak? No, says Prabha emphatically. “It could be that you’re in a more vulnerable situation now.” Instead of beating yourself up, share your thoughts with your friends and family, seek a counsellor and take charge of your situation.

IT’S IN MY GENES, WHAT CAN I DO?

Our genes play a big role in determining our predisposition, but you’re not only what your genes make you. You are bigger than your genes. There is a degree of autonomy you have—you can decide to get into a virtuous cycle for better emotional and physical health.

I’M ALWAYS SAD. SHOULD I TAKE MEDS?

All those who’re sad or ‘feel depressed’ are not prescribed antidepressants. Some people will need good sensible advice, some feel better if they talk about life issues, while others may need tools to deal with interpersonal issues. Some may require a combination of therapy and medicines. Exercise and meditation help. Some patients may have anxiety symptoms because their thyroid levels are not okay, so correcting their hypothyroid state actually corrects their depression. There is no one magic solution to depression because it is not just one thing.

A Happy Gut
A Happy Mind

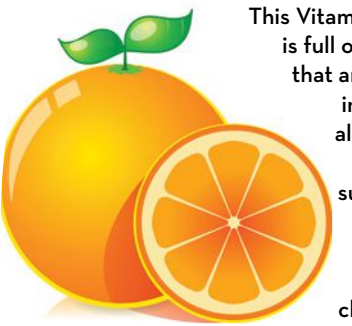
It's time to rethink your comfort foods because tackling stress and low-moods requires switching to a healthy, wholesome diet. Stress raises cortisol levels which causes food cravings. Binge-eating may provide temporary relief, but if you wish to take charge of your health, eat a wide variety of fresh plants and produce.

Garlic

Garlic is packed with powerful anti-oxidants. These chemicals neutralise free radicals (particles that damage our cells, cause diseases, and hasten ageing) and may reduce or even help prevent some of the damage the free radicals cause over time. Among the other beneficial compounds in garlic is allicin, which has been linked to fending off heart disease, cancer, and even the common cold. Because stress weakens our immune system, we need friends like garlic, which can strengthen it. it back.



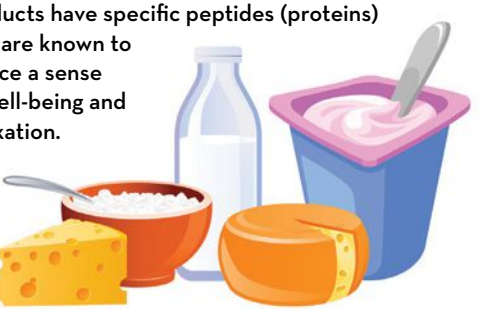
Oranges



This Vitamin C powerhouse, is full of complex 'sugars' that are released slowly into your body, not allowing it to 'crash' unlike simple sugars. Experiment with all varieties of citrus fruits—kenu, grapefruit clementines, sweet lime, tangerines.

Low-Fat Dairy

Skim milk, yoghurt, low-fat cheeses and other dairy products are rich in calcium, Vitamin D, and protein. These are great for your body for many reasons, including fighting depression. In addition to the calcium and vitamins, dairy products have specific peptides (proteins) that are known to induce a sense of well-being and relaxation.



Fatty Fish

When it comes to Omega-3 fatty acids, no food source is better than fatty fish like mackerel, sardines, wild salmon and tuna. The fatty acids found in these fish not only have specific brain-boosting properties to fight depression, but are also good for overall health. They improve circulation and reduce inflammation and your overall risk of heart disease.



Dark Chocolate

There is evidence that eaten in moderation, dark chocolate can help boost your mood. It helps release serotonin and relaxes the blood vessels, thus lowering blood pressure and adding to a feeling of calm. It also contains polyphenols and flavonols. A recent study from the University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine reports that both women and men eat more chocolate as depressive symptoms increase. Just remember that dark chocolate is also calorie-dense, with approx. 150 calories in 30g, so eat just one small piece at a time, and allow yourself this conscious indulgence.





Walnuts

When eaten in moderation, most nuts are a good source of heart-healthy fats as well as protein. But walnuts get the edge when it comes to reducing the symptoms of depression because they also are one of the richest plant-based sources of Omega-3 fatty acids.

Wholegrains

When looking for foods that fight depression, focus on healthy, high-fibre carbohydrates found in whole grains, brown rice and oatmeal. They help the body release serotonin, helping you feel good. "Complex carbs are wonderful foods to improve moods quickly," says Debbie Mandel, a stress management expert and author of *Addicted to Stress*.



SOURCE: PREVENTION.COM

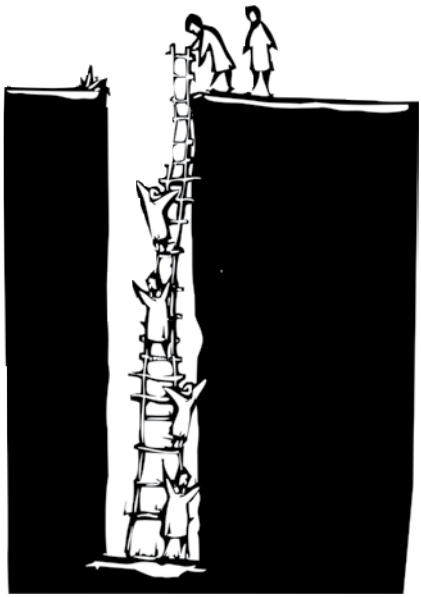
Research has provided us with some answers. Stress lowers the levels of certain hormones like serotonin and noradrenaline in the brain's limbic system that controls our emotions. It bounces back when the stressful situation is behind us. However if the stress factor is long term, chronic and low-grade, the bounce-back may not happen, changing the biochemistry of the brain, resulting in depression. The experience, says Sarin, is like wearing dark glasses—wherever her gaze goes, it will appear dark, the clarity is lost.

It's the primary reason why experts and mental health activists stress that depression should be recognised early—treatment will arrest its progress into clinical depression.

Experts unanimously warn against generalising depression. As Sarin explains, "If you don't recognise the vague fuzziness in the middle, you will not recognise the ends of the spectrum." Which makes Deepika's disclosure of clinical depression that much more important. "Deepika experienced the end of the spectrum—a condition that needs psychatric intervention. The ability to recognise these differences, and seek help in time, will give you the capacity to deal with your condition," he adds.

Women's Double Burden

It is now widely known that our physiologies makes us women more prone to depression than men. "Until age 13-14, the rate of depression among both boys and girls is the same, however after puberty, women show a 6-fold increase in risk for developing the condition," says Dr Prabha Chandra, *Prevention* advisor and professor of psychiatry, NIMHANS, Bengaluru. She's also involved in the institute's community outreach centre for well-being. "For women, the triggers range from medico-biological to psycho-social," adds Desai, speaking up for our kind, living, loving and lighting



"The ability to recognise your problem and seek help in time, will help you cope."

How I Fight Depression

A young mom and professional shares her story

What it feels like

To be depressed is to begin each day with a heavy heart. To live the perfect life, but to have a nagging anxiety that something is amiss. That something will go wrong. It is to be in the midst of a well-meaning, ever-supportive family but to feel painfully alone. It is to worry about things that others shrug off ever so easily. It is to welcome each morning with lethargy and apprehension. To be depressed is to find minor tasks insurmountable. It is to be in pain, that seems immune to exercise, to medication, to relaxation. It is to weep for nothing. It is to feel inadequate almost every waking minute. It craves sleep. It tints reality; casting a grey, gloomy and weary picture of a life that was effortless, cheerful and jaunty. Most importantly, it is to be unforgiving of oneself. It is unrelenting and ruthless, and makes you believe that you are no good. And that you never will be. It makes you second guess all that you say, all that you do and everything that you think.

Seek help

Exercise. Believe me, I know when exercise is the last thing you feel like doing. Getting out of bed is hard enough, leave alone dragging yourself to a gym. But it helps. If nothing else, it tires you out and silences those havoc creating thoughts that you trust. It paradoxically energises you.

Speak out

The most important thing to do is to talk. If you are reading this as someone supporting a person with depression, then the most helpful thing you can do is to listen. See a psychiatrist. There will be people around who won't, and possibly cannot fathom the gravity of how miserable you feel. They feel it will pass. That it is okay to feel this way. And that everyone occasionally has the blues. Please hear yourself over them. They might mean well, but only you know how you really feel. A psychiatrist can help. Be honest with the doctor. You owe yourself the right to getting better. Hard as it might be to share the most intimate thoughts with a stranger, do it. Keep a record of the treatment and keep your doctor posted.

up a largely chauvunistic society. Abuse, stressful childhood, lack of opportunities and harrasment can predispose us to depression. So can biological tickers like our cyclical hormonal changes, PMS, childbirth, post-partum and menopause. Marital trouble may trigger adjustment disorders. "Women may experience depression when faced with high levels of marital toxicity or if they find themselves stuck in 'marriages of convenience'," explains Dr Vijay Nagaswami, psychiatrist, relationship expert and author of bestselling books like *The 24X7 Marriage*, and the most recent guide to an amicable divorce in *To D or not to D*.

Our cognitive style messes a few things up too. "We tend to internalise problems, are more prone to feeling guilty, have low self-esteem and body image issues, that make things worse," adds Prabha. Paradoxically, in urban women, there appears to be another interesting driver—the need to be a superwoman. "I've always believed that the 'superwoman' has the hardest time of it all," says Nagaswami. In his view, while this is partly due to the demands and unrealistic expectations imposed by our chauvinistic environment, a fair bit is also self-imposed. If the object of women's liberation was to empower us with more choices, are we reducing those by trying to excel at everything? "Those women who understand their limitations and choose a domain to excel instead of dissipating their energies in being extraordinary 'performers' in all domains, successfully resolve this conundrum," adds the wise psychiatrist.

THE NUMBER GAME

According to the WHO, one in 4 people will suffer from a psychological illness in their lifetime. Studies indicate that nearly 7% of the population may be suffering from depression—the figures are consistently higher for women than men. An overview of Indian research in depression published in the *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* estimates that if the current trends persist, by the year 2020, depression will increase to 5.7% of the total disease burden, second only to Ischemic heart disease.



Seek help: Don't let sadness turn to depression

Depression can become disabling, so it's important to recognise and seek help early. But medication is not always the answer. If you're experiencing sadness—a universal response to setback and loss—counselling, sharing with friends, exercise, meditation and healthier lifestyle can cure it.

"In clinical depression, a person is continuously sad. It may interfere in her ability to work, sleep and enjoy the life she once did. Patients have intense feelings of hopelessness, and worthlessness," says Dr Abhinav Nahar, psychiatrist, NIMHANS. The symptoms may also include loss of happiness, interest or anticipation; frequent crying episodes, loss of memory, and appetite. In some cases, suicidal thoughts may be present.

Anti-depressants—one of the most used and abused drugs—may be prescribed in some cases, and doctors caution against their unsupervised use.

You can beat back depression by taking charge, by creating a virtuous cycle of exercise, mindfulness, meditation, therapy and treatment. Many women may get caught in fixing the physical manifestation of depression, spending months and years before they see a therapist. Sarin shares that some studies indicate how 30 to 40% cases in a gastroenterology or neurology clinics actually suffer from depression. Stigma may prevent others from seeking help.



"You can beat back depression by taking charge; exercise and meditation have been shown to help"

"Some alpha women may take time to admit that they could be suffering from depression. However, many urban women are not bothered by stigma, and are speaking out and seeking help," adds Nagaswami. Chandra has noticed a positive trend in women dealing with their empty nest, bracing themselves ahead of the situation by engaging in activities.

There are many journeys. In the end, what matters is to find your own road to well-being.


CIRCLE OF
SAFETY



Safety Drive

The statistics* are scary: **14 road accidents occur every day in India** with more than **1 death and 4 injuries every 4 minutes**. Buckle up as we take you through an expert-backed manual to keep you, your family—and others around you—out of harm's way.

BY SUNALINI MATHEW

The United Nations has declared 2011 to 2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety. Their aim is to reduce the number of road fatalities by 50%. "In India, we don't have as many cars on the roads as Brazil or China, yet we have the highest fatality rate," says Yogendra Pratap, editor, *AutoBild*, New Delhi. Here, **Ranojoy Mukherjee**, Delhi-based auto analyst, **Yogendra Pratap** and **Prof Dinesh Mohan**, professor for biomechanics and Transportation Safety, IIT, Delhi, tell you how you can contribute to staying safe.



Buy safe

Don't believe just the sales pitch. Before you buy a car, do a quick check on that company brochure for these.

- **A collapsible steering column.** In an accident, a rigid column can go into the driver's chest.
- **Side impact beams.** These are fitted in the door so the passenger 'cage' remains safe.
- **Back windscreen wiper.** Get it fitted if the car doesn't come with one.
- **Air bags.** They do cost more, but, have been proven to save lives even at 30 kmph.
- **ABS.** The anti-lock braking system helps you to steer away in case of an accident, so your wheels don't lock. It also reduces risk of collisions with pedestrians.
- **Enhanced ground clearance.** Look at a 140-150 cm clearance. This prevents unnecessary bumps to the car.
- **ESP.** The electronic stability programme is a computerised system for stability that helps you retain control of the car in case of a mishap, by acting in conjunction with the various parts, including ABS and the steering wheel. It's a good idea to opt for this if you drive along highways and in poor conditions (bad roads or weather) on a regular basis.
- **International norms.** Since Indian norms for safety are not stringent, it's best to buy a car that's being sold in Europe (they've the strictest regulations) and



OPENING SPREAD: GETTY IMAGES; ALL OTHER IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

other developed countries. It's also true that luxury cars are the best bet for safety features.

- **Experience.** Car companies that have been building cars for a few generations have more experience, hence are more likely to be better built.
- **Weight.** A very light car (less than 1,000 kg) may not be as safe as something over. Even if you need to compromise on fuel efficiency, it may be a good idea to make that investment.

Use safe

If you already own a car, do check for these.

- Have your car serviced as per the company guidelines.
- Pay special attention to the brakes. "You need to specifically ask your service centre to look at them, or they may not," says Mukherjee.
- Fix even the little things—indicator, or rear view mirrors, for instance—these are features put in for safety.
- Avoid putting in any 'accessories' or after-market add-ons, like car stereos, central locking systems, even CNG kits. Fires are often caused when the electrical system is not wired properly by your local car mechanic.
- Skip seat covers too. Cars are designed with anti-submarine seats (extra padding in front), which ensure that the driver and co-passenger don't slip in the event of a collision. Car seats are designed to repel dust and dirt, unlike a cover you buy. Dry-clean your seats each time you take it for a service instead.
- Say no to the bull bar. It may save your car from a few dents, but compromises safety. It is bolted on to the structure of the car, hence weakens it. You may end up hurting someone else in the case of a crash. It may also come right into you on impact. Cars are designed in a way, in which the inner structure is rigid and the outer shell takes the shock. A bull bar doesn't allow for the vehicle's crumple zones to do their job of crumpling, so the impact is absorbed elsewhere—by the people within the car.
- Check the seat belts. They have a life of 15 years. If something is broken, get it fixed. Back seat belts are often not used, and may malfunction when they are needed.



Booster Seat

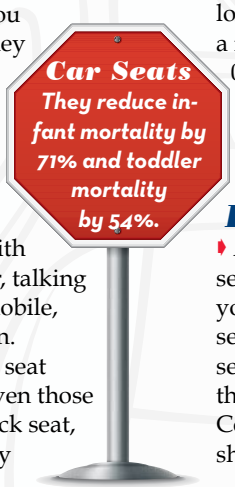
It reduces risk for serious injury by 45% in kids age 4 to 8.



When driving...

- Drive with headlights on low beam. Fog lamps in India, are unfortunately not built like they're supposed to, so keep to low beam and drive slow (not over 30 kmph in foggy weather).
- Make sure your spare tyre is in good condition always. Fill air every month, to keep it ready for an emergency.
- Always fill into cold tyres and follow the directions on the sticker under the door of the driver's seat. Low air pressure causes bursts on the highway, all too common in India. It's a good idea to keep a gauge at home, especially if you're driving long distances on a regular basis.
- Don't place anything on the dashboard (car perfumes, decorative items), as these could cause damage in case of an accident—they're like projectiles and you never know where they are headed.
- Avoid multitasking—putting on make-up, holding food with one hand and the steering wheel with the other, talking on the mobile, and so on.
- Do use seat belts—even those in the back seat, especially if you have airbags there. Seat belts prevent people from being thrown around within and out of the car in case of an accident. Studies show that they reduce risk of fatal injury in the front seat by 45%.
- Do use all the 3 rear view mirrors.
- Don't smoke in the car—besides forcing passive smoking on everyone else, you don't know what you'll do if your cigarette falls on the carpeting.
- And drinking and driving is not okay. Alcohol impairs your attention, vision and coordination increasing the risk of accidents. The Permissible alcohol limit for driving under the Indian law is 0.03% BAC (blood alcohol concentration), one of the lowest in the world. Even then, remember, no amount is safe when you are driving. Studies show that even at 0.02% BAC (about 1 glass of wine), there is some loss of judgment in being able to track a moving target. At 0.04% BAC and at 0.05% BAC your coordination gets worse, your steering is poorer and you response not well coordinated to emergency situation on the road.





If you have a child...

- Ask your car company to fix a child seat for you, rather than doing it yourself. Kids go from rear-facing car seats (0-2 years) to forward-facing car seats (2-5 years), then booster seats till the seat belt fits (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US). The belt should sit across their laps and run



across their chests, not cutting into the neck.

- Don't let a child sit on your lap if you're in the driver's seat—no, not even from the house to the gate. Kids should be in the back seat, not in front, especially if you have airbags. These are made to deploy into the chest area, so may just explode into a child's face.
- Put the child lock on, especially in cars that can be opened even when the central locking system is on.
- If your car has a sun roof, remember it's against the law and extremely dangerous for your kids to be standing up with their head out.
- If your baby is sleeping in the car seat, resist the temptation to leave him there, even for a minute or 2 to pop out for groceries or to the ATM.
- When you're not with your child, ask him not to stand behind a car, as he may be out of the line of vision of the driver.



- Even if you're pregnant, wear the seat belt.

If you have a medical condition...

Take precautions if you suffer from any of these.

Diabetes Depending on the disease management and duration, you may develop problems with your vision. "Routinely monitor eyes. This includes, both, checking your vision and examining the back of your eye (retinal screening), as you may not notice any subtle changes in vision with early problems," says Dr Usha Ayyagari, Chennai-based endocrinologist. "Also, certain meds lower blood glucose levels drastically (hypoglycaemia). This can affect the ability to concentrate and have an impact on reflexes. If you sense that your sugar levels have dipped suddenly, pull up, switch off the engine and have something for instant energy (glucose



tablets, juice, carbonated beverage that is not low sugar) and follow this up with a snack that will keep blood glucose levels up for a while—biscuits, a sandwich, a banana. Ideally, you shouldn't drive for 45 minutes after, until your sugar levels come back to normal. Always keep 2 kinds of snacks in the car: one that gives you instant energy and a fibre-rich one that keeps your sugar levels on an even keel for a while. Do test your sugar levels on longer drives every couple of hours." If you are diabetic and pregnant (if pregnancy occurred after you got diabetes), then you may be more prone to hypoglycaemia.

Pituitary problems/ surgery "This can affect your peripheral vision, which means you may not be able to see the road on either side clearly," says Ayyagari. A visual field test can be done at an eye clinic.

Epilepsy As a thumb rule, don't drive for at least 6 months after a stray incident," says *Prevention* advisor Dr Rajashekhar Reddi, head of unit & principal consultant, Neurology, Max Healthcare, New Delhi. If you have repeated attacks, wait for a year. Naturally, always go with your doctor's advice.

Heart disease If you've recently had a heart attack, then your doc will probably advise you a 4 to 6 weeks break before you get behind the wheel. "The last thing you want is sudden, unexpected bursts of stress," says *Prevention* advisor Dr Ashok Seth, chairman, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, New Delhi. "Stress increases the heart rate, so your blood pumps faster and constricts the arteries, so blood supply to the heart reduces. Plus, it increases the tendency for clotting."

Stroke Check with your doc. It all depends on which part of the brain is affected. If it's the part that affects your sense of space, then he may ask you not to drive for life.



**Source: National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Road Transport & Highway, Law Commission of India, Global Status Report on Road Safety 2013*



Research shows that though coconut oil is 90% saturated fat, it is metabolised in the body more like unsaturated oil, possibly because it comes from a plant, rather than animal, source.

In Season... **Coconut**

This nature's bounty is a powerhouse of nutrients. Coconut is rich in iron which helps with brain and muscle functions. The magnesium in it regulates blood pressure and the potassium stabilises the body's fluid balance. It is especially high in glutamine, an amino acid important for metabolic function. The zinc in it supports a healthy immune system.

How to buy: Look for ones that feel heavy, they are fresh and meaty with more water in them. Coconut water makes a healthy and refreshing drink.

How to store: Keep in its shell in the crisper, or grate and stock in an airtight container in the chill tray. *– Sakina Yusuf Khan & Prevention US*

Coconut Quinoa

PREP TIME: 15 min **TOTAL TIME:** 30 min *Serves 4*

2 c quinoa
½ c grated coconut
1Tbsp olive oil
1 c carrot, diced
1 c tomato diced
1 c zucchini, sliced thinly
2 scallions, sliced
2 c low-salt, fat-free chicken broth
¼ tsp salt

1. Heat the olive oil in a large soup pot. Add the carrot, tomato, zucchini and salt.
2. Cook, stirring frequently, for 2-3 minutes, or until the veggies start to soften. Add the quinoa. Stir to coat.
3. Add the broth. Bring to a boil and cover, then reduce the heat to low. Simmer for 10 minutes, or until all the liquid is absorbed. Take off the stove, stir in the scallions and coconut. Keep covered for 5 minutes. Serve hot.

NUTRITION (per serving) 210 Kcal, 2 g pro, 8 g carb, 7 g fat, 2 g fibre, 1.1 g sugars, 179 mg sodium





Green Beans Poriyal

PREP TIME: 5 min **TOTAL TIME:** 20 min *Serves: 4*

500 g green beans,
1 c fresh coconut, grated
1 Tbsp olive/mustard oil
1 tsp mustard seeds
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
8 to 10 curry leaves
2 green chillies, slit

1. Chop green beans finely.
2. Heat oil in a non-stick pan, add curry leaves and mustard seeds. Let them splutter.
3. Add salt and black pepper or whole slit green chillies.
4. Add beans, sauté for 5 minutes. Add coconut.
5. Cover and let it cook to crisp-tender.

NUTRITION (per serving) 252 Kcal, 4 g pro, 14 g carb, 27 g fibre, 4 g sugars, 116 mg sodium

Fish Curry in Coconut Milk

PREP TIME: 10 min TOTAL TIME: 30 min *Serves 4*

500 g fish fillet
1 small onion, sliced
1 Tbsp ginger julliens
2-3 green chilly, slit
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
2 c coconut milk
2 Tbsp mustard oil
¼ tsp salt

1. Heat oil in a heavy bottom pan.
2. Add ginger. Sauté for a minute.
3. Add onion, green chillies and stir.
4. Next, add chilli and turmeric powders. Cook on low flame for 2-3 mins.
5. Add the fish pieces and let cook — for 10 to 15 minutes on medium flame.
6. Add salt and coconut milk. Reduce heat and cook on low flame for 5 to 7 mins.
7. Serve with brown rice.

NUTRITION (per serving) 505 Kcal, 21 g pro, 27 g carb, 3.7 g fibre, 23 g fat, 1.2 g sugars, 332 g sodium

ALL IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE





Coconut Jaggery Laddoo

PREP TIME: 5 minutes TOTAL TIME: 15 minutes *Serves 6*

2 c freshly grated coconut
1 c grated jaggery
1 tsp cardamom powder
1Tbsp oil

1. Heat oil in a thick bottomed pan. Add coconut and sauté on low flame until aromatic. Keep aside.
2. Heat jaggery in another pan on low flame. Cook until it reaches a soft ball consistency. Add coconut and cardamom powder.
3. Cook until mixture leaves the sides of pan. Take off fire. When lukewarm, grease palms and make laddoos.

NUTRITION (per serving) 335 Kcal, 2.1 g pro, 34 g carb, 5 g fibre, 24 g fat, 10 g sugars, 41 mg sodium

—Nutrition counts from Swati Dwivedi



Hot off the Vine

It's here again, the season for bright red tomatoes and grocery shops and vegetable carts are overflowing with them. Enjoy the sweet, acidic tang of seasonal tomatoes that makes every meal so much better. Try these six recipes before the moment passes.

BY KHALIL HYMORE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP FICKS



Tomato Pizza

PREP TIME: 15 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 30 minutes
Serves 6

1 Tbsp + 2 tsp olive oil
350 g fresh wholewheat pizza dough
225 g low-fat ricotta cheese
2 tsp fresh lemon zest
500 g tomatoes, sliced
1 Tbsp chopped fresh chives
1 Tbsp fresh basil, torn
1 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese

1. Heat oven to 240°C. Drizzle large sheet pan with 1 Tbsp of the oil. Roll dough in oil until completely coated and stretch into large thin oval. Bake until crust is golden, about 8 minutes. Or you could buy readymade whole wheat pizza base from the market.

2. Whisk ricotta, zest, remaining 2 tsp oil, ½ tsp salt, and ¼ tsp black pepper. Spread over crust and top with tomatoes. Bake until cheese begins to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Garnish with chives, basil and Parmesan.

NUTRITION (per serving) 208 Kcal, 9 g pro, 31 g carb, 5 g fibre, 6 g sugars, 7.5 g fat, 1.5 g sat fat, 460 mg sodium

FOOD STYLING BY KHALIL HYMORE;
PROP STYLING BY KIRA CORBIN



Tomato and Egg Stacks

PREP TIME: 10 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 50 minutes
Serves 4

3 tsp olive oil
1 large onion, thinly sliced
2 tsp chopped fresh thyme
1 large tomato, sliced into 4 rounds
75 g shredded mozzarella
4 slices low-salt chicken salami (about 100 g), sliced into strips
4 large eggs

1. Heat oven to 200°C. Heat 2 tsp of the oil in medium nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, thyme, and ½ tsp salt. Cook, stirring, until onion is soft, about 6 minutes. Reduce heat to low and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is golden brown, about 20 minutes. Transfer onion to bowl.

2. Lightly coat sheet pan with cooking spray. Arrange tomato slices in even layer and top with cheese and onion. Bake until cheese is melted, 5 to 7 minutes. Meanwhile, heat remaining 1 tsp oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook until crisp, about 2 minutes. Poach eggs. Top each tomato slice with chicken and an egg before serving. Season with additional thyme, if desired.

NUTRITION (per serving) 231 Kcal, 18 g pro, 5 g carb, 1 g fibre, 3 g sugars, 15 g fat, 5.5 g sat fat, 473 mg sodium

Pickled Cherry Tomatoes

PREP TIME: 5 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 15 minutes + pickling time
Serves 8

1 tsp mustard seeds
1 tsp whole peppercorns
½ tsp fennel seeds
3 whole star anise
8 whole cloves
4 cloves garlic, smashed
1½ c white vinegar
3 Tbsp sugar
350 g cherry tomatoes
4 large sprigs oregano

1. Place mustard seeds, peppercorns, fennel seeds, star anise and cloves in medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Toast spices, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add garlic, vinegar, sugar, ¾ cup water and ¼ tsp salt. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook until sugar is dissolved, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat to cool.

2. Using a skewer, poke a hole through each tomato. Place tomatoes in medium bowl with oregano. Pour pickling mixture over tomatoes, covering them completely. Refrigerate in airtight container 24 hours before serving. (Makes 1 litre.)

NUTRITION (per serving) 10 Kcal, 0 g pro, 2 g carb, 1 g fibre, 1 g sugars, 0 g fat, 0 g sat fat, 6 mg sodium

Pickled tomatoes are great on a cheese board, in salads, or in a cocktail like a Bloody Mary.



Roasted Tomato Sauce

PREP TIME: 10 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 45 minutes
Serves 14

1 kg ripe tomatoes, cored and halved
1 carrot, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, peeled
¼ c olive oil
¼ c fresh basil

Decoding The Rainbow

Enjoy the juicy goodness of tomatoes with a bonus of powerful anti-oxidant disease. There are several varieties available in the market and differ from

1. CHERRY



Flavour: Comes in several flavours from sweet to tangy.
Tip: Best eaten fresh, or grilled.

2. ROMA



Flavour: Mild, balanced sweet and sour flavour.
Tip: Ideally eaten raw and fresh. Great for Caprese salad.

3. SAN MARZANO



Flavour: Classic flavour, fleshy, tilting towards sweet.
Tip: Best for sundried tomatoes.

Heat oven to 180°C. On sheet pan, toss together tomatoes, carrot, onion, garlic, oil and ¾ tsp salt. Roast until vegetables are tender, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer to blender along with basil and puree until smooth. (Makes about 7½ cups.)

NUTRITION (per ½ c serving) 64 Kcal, 1 g pro, 7 g carb, 2 g fibre, 4 g sugars, 4 g fat, 0.5 g sat fat, 113 mg sodium

The fridge is not your friend. Store tomatoes at room temperature. Chilling renders them tasteless.

BOTTOM TOMATO IMAGES: SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE



lycopene that helps fight cancer and cardiovascular region to region. Here are a few prominent ones.

4. HEIRLOOM
Flavour: Sweet or tangy. Not available commercially.
Tip: Wonderful raw in salads and sandwiches.



5. TOMATOES ON VINE
Flavour: Sweet.
Tip: Best for grilling.



Source: First Agro



Tomato and Salmon Salad

PREP TIME: 10 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 15 minutes
Serves 2

Make dressing: Whisk 3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil, 1 Tbsp lemon juice, 2 tsp capers (optional) drained, rinsed and roughly chopped) and 1 tsp Dijon mustard in small bowl. Season with ¼ tsp each salt and black pepper. Prepare salad: On platter, arrange 400 g sliced tomatoes in even layer and top with 400 g smoked salmon, broken into bite-size pieces; ½ small onion, sliced; ¼ cup torn parsley leaves and 1 toasted slice bread, broken into bite-size pieces. Serve with dressing and lemon wedges.

NUTRITION (per serving) 476 Kcal, 39 g pro, 21 g carb, 4 g fibre, 8 g sugars, 28 g fat, 4.5 g sat fat, 580 mg sodium

Store ripe tomatoes stem side down. This prolongs shelf life by preventing bruising.

Sweet and Savoury Tomato Jam

PREP TIME: 10 minutes | TOTAL TIME: 1 hour
Serves 16

Combine 1 kg ripe tomatoes, cored and chopped; ¾ cup sugar; ¾ cup apple cider vinegar, 4 tsp grated fresh ginger; 1/2 tsp cardamom; ½ tsp salt; ¼ tsp cinnamon and 1/8 tsp red chilli powder in medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until mixture has reduced to thick, jam-like consistency, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Refrigerate in tightly sealed container up to 10 days. (Makes 2 cups.)

NUTRITION (per 2 Tbsp serving) 53 Kcal, 1 g pro, 13 g carb 1 g fibre, 12 g sugars, 0 g fat, 0 g sat fat, 63 mg sodium



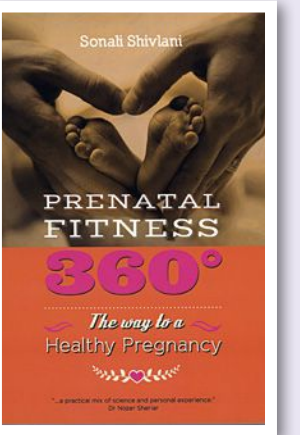


Healthy Menu

Where: Fio Cookhouse & Bar, New Delhi
The al fresco dining area transforms into a lively cafe during the day and a fine dining urban escape at night. The food is fresh, flavourful and wholesome. Try healthy picks like Minestrone Piemontese Soup with basil and Parmesan cheese and Chickpea and Home Cured Cheese Salad. There are other attractions like the Duet of Smoked Salmon Salad, served on a bed of lettuce and roasted beetroot.
Meal for two: 2,500
Contact: Epicuria Mall, Nehru Place;
Tel: +91 9810131341

Pre and Post Natal Fitness

Prenatal Fitness 360°: The Way to a Healthy Pregnancy; Westland; ₹495
Sonali Shivlani is a childbirth educator who writes about pre and post-natal care. The book is a comprehensive guide for all mums-to-be and new mums. It offers nutrition and exercise plans from pre-conception to during and after pregnancy that can help boost energy levels, immunity, and alleviate discomfort. There are also chapters on special breathing techniques, relaxation with a section on exercises for women with complicated pregnancies.

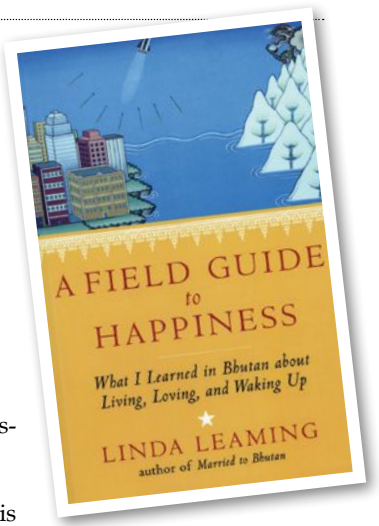




Natural Cures

Beauty At Your Fingertips; Westland; ₹295

Well-known naturopath Dr Nirmala Shetty's new book is packed with more than a hundred recipes for skin and hair care. A proponent of natural remedies, Shetty gives more than just feel good glossy advice. All of it is followed by easy-to-make recipes. From how ingredients from your kitchen—herbs, spices, fruits and vegetables—can make your skin glow, she goes on to dispense eco-friendly and sustainable solutions for all kinds of skin and hair issues: acne, rosacea, dark circles, oily skin, dry hair and premature greying of hair. There is also advice for men on taking care of their skin naturally, followed by DIY recipes for aftershave lotions, anti-dandruff shampoo, and so on. A good book to keep if you're a fan of holistic healing.



Learning To Go With The Flow

A Field Guide to Happiness—What I Learned in Bhutan about Living, Loving, and Waking Up; Hay-house; ₹299

This book is the journey of author Linda Leaming, from Nashville, Tennessee, to the Himalayan mountain kingdom of Bhutan. She shares her experiences of living in the 'happiest place on Earth', where she teaches English. In the process, she unlearns her politicised and polarised, fast-paced and impatient way of life. An easy read, it's a step-by-step guide to slowing down, changing your perspective and looking at life anew. After losing her luggage immediately upon arrival in Bhutan, Leaming realises that she also had emotional baggage to lose. As the book progresses, Leaming is forced by circumstances and the rustic surroundings to embrace a simple life and learn new skills, which she does, in the process finding peace, friendship and a husband! Leaming concludes that moving to Bhutan has been her "wake-up call" and that irrespective of how a day is spent, she now believes in cleaning the slate and starting afresh the next morning. —*By Team Prevention*

The Pudgy Pet Problem



Dogs may be the best workout partners ever, but too many of them aren't getting enough exercise. Nor are cats. Here are some fun tricks to a workout while playing with your pup or feline friend.

Experts estimate that nearly 35% of pets today are overweight, which increases their risk for arthritis, diabetes, breathing problems and heart disease. Blame the pudgy pet problem on too many treats and not enough leash time or pet parks where they can be let loose.

To know if your pet is overweight, look down at her as she is standing. You should see an indentation after her ribs—the waist. As you place your hands on her rib cage and apply gentle pressure, you should be able

to feel her ribs. If you can pinch an inch, your pet is not fluffy. She is fat. When a small-or medium-size animal gains even a little weight, it can have a significant impact on its health. If Sparky is really out of shape, take her to the vet for a thorough exam before you start upping her exercise regimen.

Here are some moves that will keep both you and your pet in shape.

■ **Interval walk** Take longer strolls with intervals that increase your pet's heart rate (at least 15 to 20 minutes); it will boost her metabolism. Try this:

» 1 minute: walk
» 20 seconds: jog
» 1 minute: walk
» 20 seconds: shuffle sideways
» 1 minute: walk
» 20 seconds: run backward

Repeat 5 times and you'll get in a decent 20-minute cardio workout. Bonus: your dog will get excited because you're always changing things up.

■ **Fetch tease for abs** Grab your pet's favourite fetch toy and get down on the floor in sit-up position. Hold the toy as you do a sit-up, and pretend to toss it as you reach the top. Fido will chase after it, only to realise you still have his toy. Do another sit-up, and pretend to toss the toy again. Try to get in as many reps as you can until your dog stops chasing and playing along.

■ **Dog stairs** Live in a high rise? Leash your pooch and pick a long staircase. Go up and down the stairs with your pet by your side and vary the way you step for a more challenging workout: take two steps at a time, widen your stance, run up the stairs sideways, and more.

■ **Cat "light" cardio** Hold a mini flashlight in each hand, about 10 feet away from a wall and pretend to jump rope. The light will bounce on the wall in front of you, and your cat will get a short burst of exercise as she tries to catch the light.



4 Key Safety Tips

- **Pets can't sweat** (they pant to cool down), so exercise in the morning or evening when it's not too hot.
- **Breeds with a pushed-in face**, like pugs or Boston terriers—have a harder time breathing in general and especially when exercising, so don't over-exert them.
- **Short-legged pets** like Dachshunds and Pomeranians are not born to run long distances. Instead, try shorter interval walks with sprints.
- **Watch for signs of exhaustion** or overheating. If your pooch pants excessively, her tongue and gums turn brick red, or if she stands or lies listlessly, stop exercising and seek immediate veterinary care.

SHUTTERSTOCK/INDIAPICTURE

What do you do to make family time special?

"We are big movie buffs. So, whenever we have the time, a movie outing works for us. We like watching films that all of us can enjoy." ***Sucheta Asthana, homemaker, 45, New Delhi***

"Visiting friends and planning get togethers with them is how we like to spend our 'we time'. We also have a switch-off smartphone time, and believe me, it's very relaxing." ***Surbhi Sinha, entrepreneur, 37, Bengaluru***

"Time with family, when everyone is home, is precious. When that happens, I cook elaborate meals as love for food connects my family. We sit together and savour homemade meals and it feels so good!" ***Sangeeta Dua, lecturer, 51, New Delhi***

"I plan cycling trips to the countryside with my husband as we are partners in fitness as well. Since cycling in the same neighbourhood every day gets monotonous, I look for new places to explore on weekends and I surprise him with my plans." ***Priyali Saxena, scriptwriter, 33, Mumbai***



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